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BUDDHA

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ARTHUR L. HUMPHREYS

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BUDDHA



HERE is no lack of current legendary narratives which the Buddhists relate concerning the founder of their faith. Can we learn anything of the life of Buddha from them? Some have gone farther, and have asked: has Buddha ever lived? Or at least, as Buddhism must have had a founder: has that Buddha ever lived whom those narratives seem to present to us, though in a superhuman form and in miraculous surroundings?

That ingenious student of Indian antiquity who has occupied himself most closely with this question, Emile Senart, answers it with an absolute no. A Buddha may have lived somewhere at some period, but that Buddha, of whom Buddhist tradition speaks, has never lived. This Buddha is not a man: his birth, the struggles he undergoes, and his death, are not those of a man.

And what is this Buddha? From the earliest age the allegorical poetry of the Indians, like that of the Greeks and the Germans, treats of the destinies of the sun-hero: of his birth from the morning-cloud, which, as soon as it has given him being, must itself vanish before the rays of its illuminating child; of his battle with and victory over the dark demon of the thunder-cloud; how he then marches triumphantly across the firmament, until at last the day declines and the light-hero succumbs to darkness.

Senart seeks to trace step by step in the history of Buddha's life, the history of the life of the sun-hero: like the sun from the clouds of night, he issues from the dark womb of Mâyâ; a flash of light pierces through all the world when he is born; Mâyâ dies like the morning-cloud which vanishes before the sun's rays. Like the sun-hero conquering the thunder-demon, Buddha vanquishes Mâra, the Tempter, in dire combat, under the sacred tree; the tree is the dark cloud-tree in heaven, round which the battle of

thunderstorm rages. When the victory is won, Buddha proceeds to preach his evangelium to all worlds, 'to set in motion the wheel of the Law'; this is the sun-god who sends his illuminating wheel revolving across the firmament. At last the life of Buddha draws to a close; he witnesses the terrible destruction of his whole house, the Sakya race, which is annihilated by enemies, as at sunset the powers of light die away in the blood-red tints of the evening clouds. His own end has now arrived: the flames of the funeral pile, on which Buddha's corpse is burnt, are extinguished by streams of water, which come pouring down from heaven, just as the sun-hero dies in the sea of fire kindled by his own rays, and the last flames of his divine obsequies die out on the horizon in the moisture of the evening mist.

In Senart's opinion, Buddha, the real Buddha, did exist, it is true: his reality, he admits, is a logical necessity, inasmuch as we see the reality of the Church founded by him; but beyond this bare reality there is nothing substantial. The fancy of his

followers attached to his person the great allegorical ballad of the life of the sun-god in human guise, the life of the man Buddha had been forgotten.

One cannot read the ingenious efforts of Senart without admiring the energy with which the French scholar constrains the Veda as well as the Indian epic, the literature of the Greeks as well as that of northern races—no small constraint was here necessary—to bear witness for his solar Buddha. But one is astonished that this so extensive reading has not availed itself, when dealing with the legends of Buddha, of one field, which would have presented not less important sources of information than the Homeric hymns and the Edda: the oldest available literature of Buddhism itself, the oldest declarations of the body of Buddha's disciples regarding the personality of their master. Senart bases his criticism almost wholly on the legendary biography, the 'Lalita-Vistara,' current among the northern Buddhists in Tibet, China and Naipal. But would it be allowable for any one, who undertook to

write a criticism on the life of Christ, to set aside the New Testament, and follow solely the apocryphal gospels or any legendary works whatsoever of the Middle Ages? Or does the law of criticism, which requires us to trace back tradition to its oldest form, before forming an opinion on it, not deserve to be as closely observed in the case of Buddhism as in that of Christianity?

The most ancient traditions of Buddhism are those preserved in Ceylon and studied by the monks of that island up to the present day.

While in India itself the Buddhist texts experienced new fortunes from century to century, and while the ceremonies of the original Church were vanishing continually more and more behind the poetry and fiction of later generations, the Church of Ceylon remained true to the simple, homely, 'Word of the Ancients,' Theravâda. The dialect itself in which it was recorded contributed to preserve it from corruptions, the language of the southern Indian territories, whose Churches and missions had naturally taken

the largest share, if not the initiative, in the conversion of Ceylon. This language of the texts, 'Pâli', imported from the south of India, is regarded in Ceylon as sacred: and it is there supposed that Buddha himself, and all Buddhas of preceding ages, had spoken it. Though the legends and speculations of later periods might find their way into the religious literature produced in the island and written in the popular tongue of Ceylon, the sacred Pâli texts remained unaffected by them.

It is to the Pâli traditions we must go in preference to all other sources, if we desire to know whether any information is obtainable regarding Buddha and his life.

There we see first and foremost that from the very beginning, as far back as we can go to the time of the earliest utterances of Buddhist religious consciousness, there is a firm conviction that the source of saving knowledge and holy life is the word of a teacher and founder of the Church, whom they designate the Exalted One, Bhagavâ, or the Knowing, the Enlightened One, Buddha.

Whoever proposes to enter the spiritual brotherhood, repeats this formula three times: 'I take my refuge with Buddha; I take my refuge in the Doctrine: I take my refuge in the Order.' At the fortnightly confession, the liturgy of which is among the oldest of all the monuments of Buddhist Church life, the monk, who leads in the confession, charges the brethren who are present, not to conceal by silence any sins which they have committed, for silence is lying, 'And intentional lying, O brethren, brings destruction; thus has the Exalted One said.' And the same liturgy of confession describes monks, who embrace heresies, by putting in their mouths these words: 'Thus I understand the doctrine which the Exalted One hath preached,' etc. Throughout it is not an impersonal revelation, nor is it the individual's own thought, but it is the person, the word of the Master, the Exalted One, the Buddha, which is regarded as the source of the truth and holy life.

And this master is not regarded as a wise

man of the dim past, but people think of him as of a man, who has lived in a not very remote past. A century is said to have passed from his death to the council of the seven hundred fathers at Vesâlî, about 380 B.C., and it may be taken as a fact that the great bulk of the holy texts, in which from beginning to end his person and his doctrine are the central points, in which his life and his death are spoken of, had been already compiled before this council of the Church assembled: the oldest components of these texts, such as the liturgy of the confession to which we have referred, belong in all probability much rather to the beginning than to the end of this first century after Buddha's death. The period, therefore, which separates the deponent witnesses from the events to which they undertake to depose, is short enough: it is not much longer, probably not at all longer, than the period which elapsed between the death of Jesus and the compilation of our gospels. Is it credible that during the lapse of such a time in the Church of Buddha, all genuine

memory of his life could be extruded by ballads of the sun-god, transferred to his personality?—crushed out in a brotherhood of ascetics, in whose circle of ideas, according to the evidence of the literature which they have bequeathed to us, everything else possessed a higher value than these very ballads of nature?

Let us now examine more closely how far the collective picture of the age of which the sacred texts speak, bears on the question of Buddha's personality. The Pâli books give us an exceedingly concrete picture of the movements of the religious world of India at the period in which Buddha, if he really lived, must have played a part in it; we possess the most minute details of all the holy men who, sometimes standing alone and sometimes surrounded by communities of adherents, with and without organisation, some in more profound and some in more shallow terms, preached to the people salvation and deliverance. There are mentioned, among others, as contemporaries of Buddha, six great teachers, to the Buddhists naturally

false teachers, the heads of six sects holding other faiths; and we find one of them, Nâtaputta, according to Bühler's and Jacobi's learned researches, mentioned in the texts of the Jaina sects, still numerous represented in India at the present day, as the founder of their faith and the saviour of these sects, with whom he occupies a place analogous to that which is given to Buddha in the Buddhist texts. As regards this Nâtaputta, we are, therefore, in such a position that we possess two groups of accounts—those of his own followers, to whom he is the holy, the enlightened one, the victor, Jina, the Buddha—the texts of the Jainas also use this last expression—and the statements of the Buddhists, who stigmatise him as an ascetic leader, teaching an erroneous doctrine—as a pretender, claiming the dignity which properly belongs to Buddha. The Buddhists, as well as the Jainas, casually mention the place where Nâtaputta died; both name the same place, the town of Pâvâ—a small but by no means insignificant contribution to the value of these traditions. The harmony of the

testimony regarding a collateral fact of this description makes us conscious that we are here treading on the sure ground of historical reality.

It is evident that Buddha was a head of a monastic order of the very same type as that to which Nâtaputta belonged; that he journeyed from town to town in the garb and with all the external circumstances of an ascetic, taught, and gathered round himself a band of disciples, to whom he gave their simple ordinances, such as the Brahmans and the other monastic brotherhoods possessed.

I hold that, even under the most unfavourable circumstances, we can lay claim to the possession of this much at least of reliable information, as reliable as any knowledge of such things can ever be.

But does all that we can gather end here? Are there not, in the masses of fable which tradition places at our disposal, some further, more specific traces of historical truth to be found, which contribute to give life to that first outline?

In order to be able to answer this question,

we shall next describe the aspect of the tradition as regards its details.

Here it must be premised as a cardinal statement: a biography of Buddha has not come down to us from ancient times, from the age of the Pâli texts, and, we can safely say, no such biography was in existence then. This is, moreover, very easily understood. The idea of biography was foreign to the mind of that age. To take the life of a man as a whole, its development from beginning to end, as a unified subject for literary treatment, this thought, though it appears to us natural and obvious, had not occurred to anyone yet in that age.

To this was added that in those times the interest in the life of the master receded entirely behind the interest attached to his teaching. It was exactly the same in the circles of the early Christian Church and in the circles of the Socratic schools. Long before people began to commit to writing the life of Jesus in the manner of our gospels, there was current in the young communities a collection of discourses and sayings of

Jesus; to this collection was appended just so much precise narrative matter as was necessary to call to mind the occasion when, and the external surroundings amid which, the several discourses were delivered. This collection of the sayings of Jesus laid no claim to any historical arrangement or sequence whatever, or to any chronological accuracy. Similarly the *Memorabilia Socratica* of Xenophon. The method and manner of Socratic action are here illustrated by a rich profusion of the individual utterances of Socrates. But neither Xenophon nor any other of the old Socratics has given us the life of Socrates. What should induce them to do so? The form of Socrates was memorable to the Socratics for the words of wisdom which came from the lips of that great, eccentric man, not for the poor external fortunes of his life.

The development of the traditions of Buddha corresponds as closely as possible to these parallel illustrations. His disciples had begun at an early date to fix those discourses which the great teacher had preached, or at

anyrate, discourses after the method and manner in which he had delivered them, and to deliver these to the Church. They did not omit to note where and to whom he had uttered or was supposed to have uttered each word; this was necessary in order to fix in concrete the situation, and thereby to place the authenticity of the respective words of Buddha beyond all doubt. But, when Buddha said so and so, they did not ask. The narratives begin: At one time—or: at this time the exalted Buddha was tarrying at such and such a place; as far as dates go, this is worthless. People in India have never had any organ for the when of things: and in the life of an ascetic, such as Buddha was especially, year after year rolled by so very uniformly that it must have appeared to them superfluous to ask: When did this or that happen? When was this or that word uttered?—provided any one had ever thought at all of the possibility of such a question arising.

Special events in the course of his wandering life, meetings with this and that other teacher, with this and that worldly potentate,

were associated with the memory of one or other authentic or invented discourse; the first stages of his public career, the conversion of his first disciples, and then again the end, his farewell address to his followers, and his death, stand out, as may be readily understood, most prominent of all in the foreground of these memories. Thus there were biographical fragments, but a biography was compiled from them for the first time at a much later period.

Comparatively few are the memoranda preserved in the older authorities regarding the early life of Buddha, the years preceding the beginning of his professional career, or, to put it as the Indians are wont to do, the period prior to the attainment of the Buddhahood, when he had not yet acquired, but was still seeking, that saving knowledge, which constituted him the teacher of the worlds of gods and men. That we hear less of these days than of others, is explicable. The interest of the Church was fixed not so much on his worldly character as the child and heir of the Sakya house, as on the

person of the 'Exalted, sacred, universal Buddha.' People desired to know what he had uttered from that time forward, when he had become the Buddha; behind that vanished the interest in everything else, even the interest in this struggle for the Buddhahood. It is later centuries which have built up a history of Buddha with wonders piled on wonders on a scale quite different from older times, and which first devoted themselves with special zeal to surrounding the form of the blessed child with the extravagant creations of a boundless imagination.

Let us now examine the tradition, meaning, of course, the older tradition continued in the sacred Pâli texts, to define accurately of what kind are the fabulous elements contained in them.

It is obvious that the appearance of the deliverer of the world on earth, must have presented itself to the believer's mind as an event of incomparable importance; to the Indian, who was and is accustomed, in the most trivial incidents of his own daily life,

to pay attention to concomitant omens, it would have been the most impossible contingency if the conception of the exalted, holy, universal Buddha had not been already announced by the mightiest wonders and signs, and if the whole universe had not joined in its celebration. An inconceivably bright flash of light pierces through the universe; the worlds quake; the four divinities, who have in their protection the four quarters of the heavens, combine to keep guard over the pregnant mother. The birth is attended by wonders in no less a degree. The Brahmans possessed lists of bodily signs which import good and bad fortunes to men; the infant Buddha must obviously bear on his person all auspicious marks in the highest perfection, in the same perfection as a world-ruling monarch; the soothsayers declare: 'if he choose a worldly life, he will become a ruler of the world; if he renounce the world, he will become the Buddha.'

We need not cite any more fabulous embellishments of this description: their

character cannot be mistaken. As it seemed to the Christian Church an obvious necessity, that all power and excellence, which the prophets of the Old Testament possessed, must have dwelt with enhanced glory in the person of Jesus, it was in the same way natural that the Buddhists should attribute to the founder of their Church all wonders and perfections, which, in the Indian mind, were attributed to the most powerful heroes and sages. Among the foundations, on which Indian intuitions rest, regarding that which pertains to an all-powerful hero and conqueror of the world, the ancient nature-myth, the original signification of which had long since ceased to be understood, is obviously not wanting; and thus it is not a matter of surprise, if one and another of the traits which were mentioned in the circles of monks and lay-disciples as indicating the nobility of Buddha, comes at last through many media to be connected with that which many centuries before, among the herdsmen and peasants of the Vedic age, and much earlier still among the common forefathers

of the Indian, Grecian, and German stocks, popular fancy had associated in song with the sun-hero, the beaming type of all earthly heroism. This is the element of propriety which cannot be denied to Senart's theory of the solar Buddha.

As regards another group of legendary touches, it may well be in part doubted whether we have not in them historical memories. The elements of the tradition regarding Buddha hitherto mentioned flowed from the universal belief in Buddha's all-overpowering might and nobility, but the much more important and more prominent characteristics, of which we shall now have to treat, have their origin partly in the special theological predicates which Buddhist speculation affirmed of the holy, knowing, Delivered One, and partly in the external events which regularly occurred in the life of the Indian ascetic, and which consequently, according to an inference so naturally drawn by legend, cannot have been wanting in the life of Buddha, the ideal ascetic.

What makes a Buddha a Buddha is, as his name indicates, his knowledge. He does not possess this knowledge, like a Christ, by virtue of a metaphysical superiority of his nature, surpassing everything earthly, but he has gained it, or, more strictly speaking, won it by a struggle. The Buddha is at the same time the Jina, that is, the conqueror. The history of the struggle for Buddhahood must therefore precede the history of the Buddha.

Battle involves an enemy, a victor the vanquished. The Prince of Life must be opposed by the Prince of Death. We have seen how the Indian mind had settled for itself the identity of the kingdom of death, and the kingdom of this world. We call to mind the 'rôle' of the Death-god in the Vedic poem of Naciketas, to whom he promises long life and fulfilment of all desire, in order that he might abandon the pursuit of knowledge. So also there comes to the ascetic seeking Buddhahood, as his opponent, Mâra, Death, the lord of all worldly desire, which indeed is nothing else than veiled death. Mâra follows his enemy step

by step, and watches for a moment of weakness to overpower his soul. No such moment comes. Amid many failures and desperate fights within, Buddha remains throughout unshaken.

When he is on the point of reaching the saving knowledge, the purchase of all his efforts, Mâra approaches him to divert him by tempting words from the path of salvation. In vain. Buddha attains the knowledge 'that bringeth salvation' and the supreme peace.

We choose the narrative of this last struggle and victory, to illustrate by it the difference between Senart's and our conception of the nature of these legends.

How does the primitive Church narrate the history of the attainment of the knowledge which 'maketh free'? What are the real facts of the occurrence as accepted by them? This, and only this, that Buddha, passing through a series of stages of ecstasy, sitting under a tree through the three watches of a certain night, obtains the threefold sacred knowledge, that his soul

becomes free from all sinful taint, and he becomes partaker of deliverance with a knowledge of his deliverance. These purely theological elements far transcend in importance, in the opinion of the primitive Church, the struggle with Mâra; wherever in the sacred Pâli texts the attainment of Buddhahood is described, there is not a word spoken of Mâra.

Some few passages in the texts narrate distinct encounters of Buddha with Mâra: sometimes they are referred to a time not long before and sometimes to a time not long after the attainment of Buddhahood. Mâra endeavours by seductive speeches to turn him from the path of holiness; mention is also made of temptresses, who, when the tempter has given up all for lost, renew the fight; the daughters of Mâra, named Desire, Unrest, and Pleasure. Buddha remains unmoved in his peaceful quietude.

These are the unadorned representations of the primitive Church. The simple thoughts, from which these have been constructed, are, it seems, so very evident, that it would be

no easy task even for the keen intellect of Senart, to show that this is the old myth of the victory of the sun-hero over the cloud-demons. Senart does not even attempt this, but he leaves this cast of the legends wholly untouched.

He bases his criticism instead on that romance of wonders into which the grotesque tastes of later ages have transformed this primitive story. Buddha sits down under the tree of knowledge with the firm resolve not to rise until he has attained the knowledge which 'maketh free.' Then Mâra advances with his forces; hosts of demons assail him, Buddha, with fiery darts, amid the whirl of hurricanes, darkness, and the downpour of floods of water, to drive him from the tree; Buddha maintains his position unmoved; at last the demons fly.

Whoever wishes to give a complete picture of Senart's mythological fancies, must reproduce the history of this struggle of Buddha and the demons in much greater detail than I can make up my mind to do for this wild and coarse tableau of miracles and sensa-

tions, wholly foreign to ancient Buddhism. I shall confine myself to the discussion of a few characteristic points.

The tree under which Buddha sits. Mâra is determined to drive him from it, that is, naturally, he will defeat his resolve not to rise until he has attained deliverance. The demon says: 'this place does not belong to you, it belongs to me.'

Thus, Senart concludes, the true object of the fight is the tree. The tree belongs to Mâra: Buddha has taken possession of it. Contesting with him the possession of the tree and contesting with him the possession of deliverance are the same. How does the tree come to have this importance? What is the tie which connects the possession of the knowledge that brings deliverance, to which Buddha's efforts are directed, with the possession of the tree?

The Veda mentions the heavenly tree which the lightning strikes down; the mythology of the Fins speaks of the heavenly oak which the sun-dwarf uproots. Yama, the Vedic god of death, sits drinking with bands

of the blessed under a leafy tree, just as in the northern Saga Hel's place is at the root of the ash Yggdrasill.

The tree is the cloud-tree: in the clouds the heavenly fluid is stored, and it is guarded by the dark demons; in the hymns of the Veda the powers of light and the powers of darkness fight their great battle for the clouds and the ambrosia which they contain: this is the identical battle of Buddha with the hosts of Mâra. In the cloud-battle the ambrosia, amrita, which is in the clouds, is won; the enlightenment and deliverance, which Buddha wins, are also called an ambrosia, amrita; the kingdom of knowledge is the land of immortality, padam amritam.

This is Senart's explanation.

Would this acute scholar have ventured it, had he had before him the old account of the occurrence under the tree which is composed solely of dogmatic elements such as the description of the four ecstasies and the threefold knowledge attained by Buddha? If he had been aware that Buddha and Mâra in the older texts do not fight under the

tree, still less for the tree? That the only reference we hear of, made to the tree of knowledge, the supposed cloud-tree and ambrosia-tree, is this, that Buddha sat at its foot, when he fell into those trains of thought, which led him to the highest knowledge? Where else sat in India in Buddha's time, where else even down to our days do ascetics, who have no sheltering roof, and all vagrant folk, sit, but at the foot of a tree? We are not comparative mythologists and we cannot forget that, besides these cloud-trees which are shattered by lightning or uprooted by the sun-dwarf, there grow other trees also on the earth, and we go so far as to surmise, that the trees, at the foot of which Gotama Buddha was wont to sit and meditate, belonged to this latter, much less deep-meaning but more widely extended, class of trees.

Nor are we more successful in the effort to persuade ourselves of the mythical character of the remaining elements of the narrative, than we have been in the case of the Tree of Knowledge. The demons, who make an

assault on Buddha, fling mountains of fire, trees with their roots, glowing masses of iron, and, 'as if these so evident and obvious symbols did not suffice, rain, darkness and lightning complete the picture, and figure as the most characteristic touches of the whole scene.' It does seem to us as if nothing can be less characteristic than these very touches; nothing presents itself to the fancy as more natural or necessary for the assaults of bands of demons than the accessories of lightning, thunder and darkness. Or are those spirits also; by whom Caliban is tormented on the magic island, thunder-demons?

The vanquished Mâra is compared to a trunk without hands and feet, and precisely in the same way the cloud-demon Vritra, whom Indra crushes with his thunderbolt, is styled in the Veda 'footless and handless.' But what is thus said of Mâra is nothing more than one in a hundred similes used regarding him, and therefore means very little; and, furthermore, can one not lose hands and feet in any other battles beside the battle of the thunder-storm?

But enough of these vagaries of the sunshine theory. We may say in a word: the components which go to make up the history of the attainment of the Buddhahood, and, we may add, countless similar narratives in the legends of Buddha, are not to be explained by reference to the mythology of the Veda, and still less to that of the Edda, but by the dogmatics of the Buddhist doctrine of deliverance and the external conditions and habits of Buddhist monastic life.

One class of doubts, however, and this is evident, cannot be fully resolved by this method of explanation. In each individual instance in which we have succeeded in showing that occurrences narrated of Buddha are frequent, or even constant, events in the life of Indian ascetics generally, one may proceed to reason further in two different ways. Either, here we have before us credible memoranda, for we see that things were wont to take this course; or, here we have not credible memoranda before us, for, inasmuch as this course is the regular course

which things took in the period succeeding Buddha's death, the legends of Buddha's life must have been concocted so as to suit this precise course of events and no other.

To decide with certainty which of the two lines of reasoning is proper to pursue in each case is absolutely impossible. He who has arrived at this stage of the investigation must unreservedly acknowledge the limits which are here placed to inquiry, or, at all events, he must acquiesce in making up his mind as to the greater or less degree of probability in the one or the other of the two alternatives, and, in doing so, it will be impossible, of course, quite to exclude the momentum of subjective feeling from the momenta determining this decision.

If we now abstract from the traditions those of the categories indicated, which are wholly unhistorical, or are at least suspected to be of unhistorical character, we then have left as the very pith of these stories regarding Buddha a thread of facts, which we may claim to be a perfectly reliable, though, it may be, a very meagre historical acquisition.

We know about Buddha's native country and about the family from which he came. We know about his parents, the early death of his mother, and about her sister, who brought up the boy. We know a number of other facts which extend over the several parts of his life. It would indeed be quite inconceivable, even in India, if the Church which called itself by the name of the son of the Sakya house had, within a century after his death, ceased to preserve, even though veiled in legend, a correct memory of the most important names of the persons round Buddha, and of certain leading public events in his life. Who would admit it possible for the memory of Joseph and Mary, of Peter and John, of Judas and Pilate, of Nazareth and Golgotha, to be forgotten or supplanted by inventions in the early Christian Churches of the first century? Here, if anywhere, it is fair to accept simple facts as such.

Or are we in error, and is that criticism in the right which even here discovers gross deception? Must not even the name of Buddha's native town, Kapilavatthu, excite

suspicion? The abode of the Kapila, the mythical primitive philosopher Kapila, the founder of the Sâmkhya school? Why should we not seek, aye, and find, arcana of mythology, allegory and literary history in such a name? Especially when of opinion, as Senart is, that the very existence itself of such a town is not guaranteed to us on any satisfactory evidence whatever.

Is the evidence really unreliable? The Chinese pilgrims, who travelled in India in the fifth and seventh centuries after Christ, saw the ruins of the town. But, interposes Senart, no one can tell by looking at the ruins whether the town to which they belong was called Kapilavatthu. Unfortunately, most assuredly no one can tell by a look, although there is always some weight to be attached to the local traditions connected with the place, and in this case also to the monuments still extant in the time of those Chinese pilgrims. The strongest confirmation, however, of what the Chinese pilgrims state, lies in the fact that, on the one hand, the occasional direct statements and indirect

hints of the sacred Pâli works regarding the site of the town, and, on the other hand, the route of the pilgrims who looked for it, if both be traced on the map of India, coincide exactly: in addition to this, at the very place where, according to this evidence, Buddha's home must have been, there is a small stream which, even in the present day, bears the same name, Rohinî, as was borne by a stream in the territory of the Sakyas often mentioned in the Buddhist traditions. I hold, stronger indications it is impossible to expect of an early demolished town in a country in which systematic excavations have not yet been made.

Buddha's mother Mâyâ, that is, 'miraculous power,' has also become a mark for criticism because of her significant name. To Senart, Mâyâ, who dies a few days after the birth of her son, is the morning vapour, which vanishes before the rays of the sun. Weber, who thought at an earlier period that he had discovered in Mâyâ's name a reference to the cosmic power of Mâyâ in the Sâmkhya philosophy, has himself revoked this opinion

elsewhere at a later period, remembering that the notion of the Mâyâ belongs, not to the Sâmkhya school, but to the Vedanta system; it may be added, that every philosophico-mystical idea of the Mâyâ is wholly foreign to the ancient Buddhist texts throughout, and consequently the name of Buddha's mother cannot have been invented out of deference to any such idea.

We must admit that we place greater reliance on tradition. We believe that the town of Kapilavatthu had once an existence, that Buddha passed his youth there, and that the sacred texts name his mother Mâyâ, not because of any mythical or allegorical secrets, but because she was so called.

Having unfolded our estimate of the value of the tradition, we now proceed to sketch the history of Buddha's life.

The noble boy Siddhattha was born in the country and the tribe of the Sakyas, 'The Powerful,' somewhere about the middle of the sixth century before Christ. Better known than this name which he seems to have borne in the family circle, are other

appellations. As a preaching monk wandering through India he was to his contemporaries 'The ascetic Gotama'—this surname the Sakyas had, in accordance with the custom of Indian noble families, borrowed from one of the ancient Vedic bard-families; to us no name for this renowned of all Indians is so familiar as that with which the disciples who accepted his faith have expressed his authoritative position as the overthrower of error, as the discernor of the truth which gives deliverance, the name Buddha, that is, 'the enlightened,' 'the knower.'

We can point out the native land of Buddha on the map of India with tolerable accuracy.

Between the Nepalese lower range of the Himalaya and the middle part of the course of the Rapti, which runs through the north-eastern part of the province of Oudh, there stretches a strip of level, fruitful land, some thirty English miles broad, well-watered by the numerous streams that issue from the Himalayas. Here lay the not very extensive territory over which the Sakyas claimed

supremacy and dominion. On the east the Rohini separated their lands from their neighbours; to this day this stream has preserved the name which it bore more than two thousand years ago. On the west and south the rule of the Sakyas extended quite up, or nearly so, to the Rapti.

Scarcely anywhere does the appearance of a country depend so completely on the activity or sloth of its inhabitants, as in these parts of India adjoining the Himalayas. The mountains send forth year by year inexhaustible volumes of water: whether for the benefit or for the destruction of the country depends solely on man's activity. Tracts of land which in times of unrest and thriftlessness are a swampy wilderness, the homes of pestilential vapours, may by a few years of regular and steady industry pass into a state of high and prosperous culture, and, if the causes of decline set in anew, return still more quickly to the state of a wilderness.

In the time of Sakya sovereignty this land must have been highly cultivated, a condition

which it again attained under the government of the great emperor Akbar, and which, after long periods of protracted disquiet and sore decay, it is just now beginning once more to approach under the beneficent hand of the British administration, which is intent on supplying the land with the necessary working power.

Between tall forests of sál trees yellow rice-fields spread out in uniform richness. The rice plant, which the Buddhist texts here mention, constitutes to-day, as in ancient times, the chief crop of this country, where the water of the rainy season and of inundations remains long standing on the rich soil of the low lying flats, and renders in great measure superfluous that excessively troublesome artificial irrigation which is elsewhere necessary for rice. Between the rice-fields we may here and there place villages in the days of the Sakyas such as exist to-day, hidden among the rich dark-green foliage of mangos and tamarinds, which surround the village site. In the background of the picture, over the black masses of the

mountains of Nepal, rise the towering snow-capped summits of the Himalayas.

The kingdom of the Sakyas was one of those small aristocratic governments, a number of which had maintained themselves on the outskirts of the greater Indian monarchies. We shall not be far astray if we picture to ourselves the Sakyas as the forerunners in some fashion of such Rajput families as have in later times, by the aid of armed bands, held their ground against neighbouring rajas. Of these greater monarchies there stood in closest proximity to the Sakyas, the powerful kingdom of Kosala, corresponding pretty nearly with the Oudh of to-day, adjoining it on the south and west. The Sakyas looked on themselves as Kosalas, and the kings of Kosala claimed certain rights over them, though probably merely honorary rights; later on they are said to have brought the Sakya-land wholly within their power, and to have exterminated the ruling family.

But though the Sakyas occupied but an insignificant position in respect of military

and political power among their neighbours, the haughty spirit which prevailed in their ancient family was characteristic of the Sakya line. Brahmans who had entered the council chamber of the Sakyas could testify to the little notice which these worldly nobles, who derived their nobility from the king Okkâka, Ikshvâku, renowned in song, were inclined to take of the claims of spiritual dignitaries.

Of the wealth also of the Sakyas our authorities speak frequently. They talk of them as 'a family blessed with prosperity and great opulence,' and mention the gold which they possess, and which the land they rule produces. The chief source of their wealth was undoubtedly rice cultivation; and the advantageous position of their territory, commercially, which had been formed, as it were, for a medium of communication between the mountain range and the Gangetic plains, cannot have been unavailed of.

A widespread tradition represents Buddha as having been a king's son. At the head of this aristocratic community there must

certainly have been some one leading man, appointed, we know not by what rules, with the title of king, which can scarcely in this case have indicated more than the position of 'primus inter pares.' But the idea that Buddha's father, *Suddhodana*, enjoyed this royal dignity is quite foreign to the oldest forms in which the traditions regarding the family are presented to us: rather, we have nothing more or less to contemplate in *Suddhodana* than one of the great and wealthy landowners of the Sakya race, whom later legends first transformed into the 'great king *Suddhodana*.'

The mother of the child, *Mâyâ*, also a member of the Sakya stock, died soon—seven days, it is said—after the birth of the boy. Her sister, *Mahâpajâpatî*, another wife of *Suddhodana*, filled for him the place of mother.

Traditional story represents with apparent truth that the young noble passed his youth in the capital of the Sakya realm, in *Kapilavattu*, 'red place,' or red earth. This town, wholly unknown to Brahmanical literature,

cannot have been of much importance, although in an old Buddhist dialogue it is spoken of as a densely-populated place, in the narrow streets of which were thronging elephants, carts, horses, and men.

We know scarcely anything of Buddha's childhood. We hear of a step-brother and of a step-sister renowned for her beauty, children of Mahâpajâpatî. What was the difference of age between them and their brother, is not known.

In the training of nobles in those lands which were but slightly attached to Brahmanism, more attention was paid to martial exercises than to knowledge of the Veda. Buddhists have not attributed Vedic scholarship to their master. Many a day may have been passed by the boy out of doors on his father's estate, indulging in meditations, as an old text describes him to us, in a field under the cool shade of a fragrant jambu tree.

Among the opulent and gentle youth of that age, it was indispensable to the comfort of a style of life in keeping with their dignity,

to have three palaces, which were constructed to be occupied by turns corresponding to the changes of winter, summer, and rains. Tradition states that the coming Buddha passed his early years in three such palaces, a life the background of which was the same scenery, the wonderful splendour of which then surrounded, and, still unchanged, now surrounds, the habitations of Indian nobles; shady gardens with lotus-pools on which the gently waving, gay-coloured lotus-flowers gleam like floating flower-beds, and in the evening diffuse their fragrance afar, and outside the town the pleasure-grounds to which the walks or elephant-rides lead, where rest and solitude await the comer, far from the bustle of the town, beneath the shade of tall and thick foliaged mango, pipal and sál-trees.

We are told that the coming Buddha was married—but whether to one or several wives is not known—and that he had a son, Râhula, who afterwards became a member of his religious order. These statements we can the less regard as concoctions, the more casually

and incidentally they meet us in the older traditions, the person of Râhula or of his mother being there employed neither for didactic purposes nor to introduce pathetic situations. If one takes into account the part which the obligation of austere chastity plays in the ethical views and the monastic rules of the Buddhists, he will understand that had we before us here not facts but gratuitous inventions, the tendency of the fabricators of the history must have been rather to throw a veil over a real existing marriage of Buddha than to invent one which had no existence.

These scanty traces exhaust all that is handed down to us, credible concerning Buddha's early life. We must forbear asking the question, from what quarter and in what form the germs of those thoughts entered his soul which drove him to change home for exile and the plenty of his palaces for the poverty of a mendicant.

We can very readily understand how, in the oppressive monotony of idle ease and satiated enjoyment, there may have come

directly over an earnest and vigorous nature a mood of restlessness, the thirst for a career and a struggle for the highest aims, and the despair at the same time to find anything to assuage that thirst in the empty world of transitory pleasure. Who knows anything of the form which these thoughts may have assumed in the mind of the youth, and how far the impulse which pervaded that age, and led men and women to leave home for an ascetic life, acting from without upon these inner predispositions, may have influenced him also ?

We have in one of the holy texts a description which shows in bare simplicity, how the early disciples represented to themselves the awakening of the fundamental ideas of their faith in the mind of their master.

Buddha is speaking to his disciples of his youth, and after he has spoken of the abundance which surrounded him in his palaces, he goes on to say :

‘With such wealth was I endowed, my disciples, and in such great magnificence did I live. Then these thoughts arose within me.

"A weak-minded, everyday man, although he is himself liable to decay and is not free from the power of old age, feels horror, revulsion and disgust, if he sees another person in old age: the horror which he then feels recoils on himself. I also am subject to decay and am not free from the power of old age. Should I also, who am subject to decay and am not free from the power of old age, feel horror, revulsion, and disgust, if I see another in old age? This would not be becoming to me." While I thus reflected, my disciples, in my own mind, all that buoyancy of youth, which dwells in the young, sank within me. A weak-minded everyday man, though he be himself liable to sickness, and is not free from the power of disease,' and so on—then the same train of thought, which has been stated regarding old age and youth, follows in reference to disease and health, and then in regard to death and life. 'While I, my disciples,' thus ends this passage, 'thus reflected in my mind, all that spirit of life which dwells in life, sank within me.'

A later age desired to see illustrated in

concrete occurrences, how for the first time and with impressive power the thoughts of old age, disease, and death crept over the young man, healthy and in the freshness of life, and how he was directed by some significant example to that path which leads away beyond the power of all suffering. Thus was invented, or rather transferred to the youth of Gotama, a legend which was narrated of one of the legendary Buddhas of bygone ages—the familiar history of the four drives of the youth to the garden outside the town, during which the pictures of the impermanence of everything earthly presented themselves to him one after the other, in the form of a helpless old man, a sick person, and a dead body; and at last a religious mendicant with shaven head and wearing yellow garments meets him, a picture of peace and of deliverance from all pain of impermanence. In that way later tradition concocted this narrative preparatory to the flight of Gotama from his home. Of all this the early ages knew nothing.

When Gotama left home to lead a religious

life, he was, according to good tradition, twenty-nine years old.

He must have been no mean poet in whose hand the history of this flight grew into that poem, rich in the splendour of Indian colouring, as we read it in the later books of legends.

The king's son returns from that drive during which, by the appearance of a religious mendicant, thoughts of a life of peaceful renunciation had come home to him. When he mounts his chariot, the birth of a son is announced to him. He says: 'Râhula is born to me, a fetter has been forged for me'—a fetter which tries to bind him to the home-life from which he is struggling to part. A princess, who is standing on the balcony of the palace, beholds him as he approaches the city on his chariot, diffusing a beaming radiance. She breaks out at the sight of him into these words: 'Happy the repose of the mother, happy the repose of the father, happy the repose of the wife, whose he is, such a husband!' The young man hears her words and thinks to himself: 'well might she say that a blessed repose

enters the heart of a mother, when she beholds such a son, and blessed repose enters the heart of a father and the heart of a wife. But whence comes the repose which brings happiness to the heart?' And he gives the answer himself: 'when the fire of lust is extinguished, when the fire of hatred and infatuation is extinguished, when ambition, error, and all sins and sorrows are extinguished, then the heart finds happy repose.'

In his palace the prince was surrounded by beautiful, gaily-attired handmaids, who sought to dissipate his thoughts with music and dance: but he neither looks upon nor listens to them, and soon falls into sleep. He wakes up at night and sees by the light of the lamps those dancing-girls wrapt in slumber, some talking in their sleep, some with running mouths, and of others again the clothes have become disarranged and exposed repulsive deformities of the body. At this sight it was to him as if he were in a burial-place full of disfigured corpses, as if the house around him were in flames. 'Alas! danger surrounds me,' he cried; 'alas! distress

surrounds me! Now is the time come for me to go on the great pilgrimage.' Before hastening away, he thinks of his new-born son: 'I will see my child.' He goes to his wife's chamber, where she is sleeping on a flower-strewn couch, with her hand spread over the child's head. Then the thought occurs to him: 'If I move her hand from his head to clasp my child, she will awake. When I shall have become Buddha, I shall return and see my son.' His trusty steed Kanthaka is waiting outside, and thus the prince flies, seen by no human eye, away from wife and child and from his kingdom, out into the night, to find rest for his soul and for the world and the gods, and behind him follows Mâra, the tempter, shadow-like, and watches till perchance a moment may come, when a thought of lust or unrighteousness, entering the struggling soul, will give him power over the hated enemy.

That is poetry; now listen to the bare prose, in which an older age speaks of the flight, or rather of the departure of Gotama, from his home:

‘The ascetic Gotama has gone from home into homelessness, while still young, young in years, in the bloom of youthful strength, in the first freshness of life. The ascetic Gotama, although his parents did not wish it, although they shed tears and wept, has had his hair and beard shaved, has put on yellow garments, and has gone from his home into homelessness.’

Or, as it is put in another place: ‘Distressing is life at home, a state of impurity: freedom is in leaving home: while he reflected thus, he left his home.’

It is necessary, in the face of the highly coloured poetical form into which later ages have thrown the history of Buddha’s departure from Kapilavatthu, to remember these unadorned fragments of the little which older generations knew or desired to know of these things.

After the early life passed at home comes the period of homelessness, of wandering ascetic life. Only in his case who has severed the ties of home and family, can the effort to attain eternal blessings lead

to success; such was the conception of that age.

Seven years of inquiry are stated to have passed from the day when Gotama left his native town, till the consciousness of realisation was imparted to him, till he felt himself to be the Buddha, the deliverer, and the preacher of deliverance to the worlds of gods and men.

He trusted himself during this period of seven years at first to the guidance of two successive spiritual teachers, to find what the language of that time termed 'the highest state of sublime repose,' the 'un-originated, the Nirvāna, the eternal state.' The path, in which these teachers directed him, must have been grounded on the production of pathological conditions of self-concentration, such as have in later Buddhism played a not unimportant part: conditions in which, by a long-continued observance of certain bodily discipline, the spirit seeks to divest itself of all concrete subject-matter, of every entity, of every conception, and, as is added, even of conceptionlessness.

Then he left these teachers unsatisfied, and travelled through the land of Magadha until he came to the town of Uruvelâ. An old narrative puts these words into his mouth when he speaks of this wandering: 'Then, O disciples, I thought within myself: truly this is a charming spot of earth, a beautiful forest: clear flows the river, with pleasant bathing-places, and fair lie the villages round about, to which one can go: here are good quarters for one of high resolve, who is in search of salvation.'

Then in the woods of Uruvelâ Gotama is said to have lived many years in the severest discipline. It is described how he sat there, his tongue pressed against his palate, resolutely 'checking, repressing, chastening' his aspirations, waiting the moment, when the supernatural illumination should come upon him. It comes not. He struggles for a still more perfect performance by imposing the greatest strains on his physical frame: he holds his breath: he denies himself nourishment. Five other ascetics are living in his neighbourhood: in astonishment at the

resolution with which he pursues his mortifications, they wait to see will he be made partaker of the longed-for enlightenment, in order that they may tread as his disciples the path of deliverance indicated by him. His body becomes attenuated by self-inflicted pain, but he finds himself no nearer the goal. He sees that self-mortifications cannot lead to enlightenment: so he takes nourishment again freely to regain his former strength. Then his five companions abandon him: he seems to them to have deserted his own cause, and there appears to be nothing more to hope for or of him. So Gotama remains alone.

One night, the old traditions narrate, the decisive turning-point came, the moment wherein was vouchsafed to the seeker the certainty of discovery. Sitting under the tree, since then named the Tree of Knowledge, he went through successively purer and purer stages of abstraction of consciousness, until the sense of omniscient illumination came over him: in all-piercing intuition he pressed on to apprehend the wanderings of spirits in

the mazes of transmigration, and to attain the knowledge of the sources whence flows the suffering of the world, and of the path which leads to the extinction of this suffering.

‘When I apprehended this,’ he is reported to have said of this moment, ‘and when I beheld this, my soul was released from the evil of desire, released from the evil of earthly existence, released from the evil of error, released from the evil of ignorance. In the released awoke the knowledge of release: extinct is re-birth, finished the sacred course, duty done, no more shall I return to this world; this I knew.’

This moment the Buddhist regards as the great turning-point in his life and in the life of the worlds of gods and men: the ascetic Gotama had become the Buddha, the awakened, the enlightened. That night which Buddha passed under the tree of knowledge, on the banks of the river Neranjara, is the sacred night of the Buddhist world.

Thus the holy text narrates the history of the inner struggles of Gotama and his un-

tiring pursuit of knowledge and peace. Is there any historical fact in this narrative?

We are here face to face with a question, on which the analysis of the historical critic is unable to return a clear and bold verdict, a decisive Yes or No.

The character of the sources does not of itself determine whether we here have historical fact or legend before us. In the authorities unquestionable truth is mixed up with just as unquestionable romance: the history of the attainment of Buddhahood does not bear any direct traces of being either the one or the other.

So much is clear that, granted even that Buddha had not experienced, and had not even professed to have experienced, something analogous to this, still the existence of this narrative among the groups of his disciples can be readily understood. If he was the Buddha, if he possessed sacred knowledge, he must at some place and at some definite moment have become the Buddha, have attained that sacred knowledge, and before this moment there must have been—

legend-weaving fancy could scarcely have overlooked this conclusion — a period in which the consciousness that he was still far from his goal, dominated strongly and painfully. What can this period of bootless search have been like? At every step the disciples of Buddha had to contend against the tendencies of ascetics who expected to attain quietude through fasting and severe bodily discipline. It is not surprising that this opposition in which they felt themselves to be to these tendencies should have influenced the belief of the early Church regarding Buddha's own previous history: he, too, must, before he became partaker of the imperishable treasure of true deliverance, have sought for salvation in the mazes of bodily discipline; he must have surpassed all that Brahmans and devotees had accomplished before him in the way of self-mortification, and he must have realised for himself the fruitlessness of such a course, until he at last, turning from the false to the true path, became the Buddha.

It is, therefore, evident that the narrative

concerned may be a myth: the conditions, which suffice to make the concoction of such a myth comprehensible, certainly exist. And this possibility of a purely mythical conception gains further support by the undoubted mythical character of the occurrences yet to be discussed, which followed on the attainment of Buddhahood.

But showing that a thing may be a myth is not equivalent to showing that it is a myth, and I am inclined to think that that which can be urged in favour of an opposite conception is by no means without weight.

The coming of such a sudden turning-point in Buddha's inner life corresponds much too closely with what in all times similar natures have actually experienced under similar conditions, for us not to be inclined to believe in such an occurrence. In the most widely different periods of history the notion of a revolution or change of the whole man perfecting itself in one moment meets us in many forms: a day and hour it must be possible to determine, in which the unsaved and unenlightened becomes a saved

and enlightened man : and if men hope and look for such a sudden, and probably also violent, breaking through of the soul to the light, they realise it in fact. Within the Christian Church we have the Methodists especially, but not they alone, who bear testimony to this. Furthermore, phenomena of this kind are not confined by any means to persons of a vulgar type, living in a dull religious atmosphere. On the contrary, natures which are endowed with the keenest spiritual sensibility, with the most versatile power of imagination, are especially susceptible of such experiences. A flash of thought, a sudden excitement of warm emotion or vivid imagination, or a moment of tranquil breathing-time following on times of internal strife, is metamorphosed for them into that opening of the heart, or that call by divine omnipotence, for which they were consciously or unconsciously waiting, and which is sufficient to give a new turn to their whole life.

In the age of which the sacred writings of the Buddhists give us a picture, and, we

may add with probability, in Buddha's own time, the belief in a sudden illumination of the soul, in the fact of an internal emancipation perfecting itself in one moment, was universally prevalent: people looked for the 'deliverance from death,' and told one another with beaming countenance that the deliverance from death had been found: people asked how long it was till one striving for salvation is able to attain his goal, and gave one another to understand, with and without figure or parable, that of course the day and hour, in which the fruit of immortality will be given to man, are not in his power, but still the Master promised to his follower that, if he trod the right path, 'after a short time that for which noble youths leave their homes to lead a pilgrim life, the highest achievement of religious effort, would be vouchsafed to him, that he would yet in this life apprehend the truth itself, and see it face to face.' This visionary grasp of truth some pursued by mortification, others by abstraction of the mind, pushed to the utmost limit and accompanied

by long protracted retention of the body in fixed postures, all waiting the moment in which the attainment of their aim would be clearly realised by them with absolute certainty. When anyone came to regard his natural state as impermanent and dark, that to which he aspired, and which he, therefore, expected finally to actually realise, could not but appear to him to be a condition of purer internal illumination and self-knowledge, and with this condition of pure internal illumination was combined the consciousness of his own power to look, by visionary intuition, through the whole concatenation of the universe.

We can scarcely doubt that such a mode of viewing things prevailed among religious inquirers at Buddha's time. Whoever left his home and became a mendicant did so looking for the coveted fruit of enlightenment. May we not also surmise that similar expectations filled the heart of the Sakya youth, when he left his native town? That he then experienced within himself those struggles, those combats between hope and

doubt, of which the history of those who have paved new paths for religious feeling and thought have so much to say? That after periods of intense mental, and why not also bodily, anguish there arose in him at a particular moment the feeling of clearer rest and internal certainty, and he laid hold on this as the longed-for illumination, as a token of deliverance come? That he thenceforward felt himself to be the Buddha, the one called by a universal law to be a follower of the Buddhas of bygone ages, and determined to bring to others the blessing which had been imparted to him?

If the process was anything like this, it cannot but have followed that Buddha at a later time communicated to the disciples, to whom he pointed out the path to holiness, these inner experiences also, through which he was conscious of having himself attained his goal: and though the memory of these communications may have received in the Church in the course of time a stamp of scholastic dogmatism, yet their original character must always have shone through. In

this sense it is quite possible that this narrative may cover actual fact.

The historical inquirer cannot create certainties where there are only potentialities. Let each individual come to a conclusion, or refrain from coming to a conclusion, as he thinks proper; let me be allowed, for my part, to declare my belief that, in the narrative of how the Sakya youth became the Buddha, there is really an element of historical memory.

With this decisive turning-point begins in our authorities a long-connected narrative. This gives us a picture of how the early Church represented to itself Buddha's first public appearance, the winning of the first converts, and the triumph over the first opponents. They were still far from thinking of an attempt to delineate a continuous sketch of Buddha's life, but these first days of his public life, as well as his last days, were invested with an especial interest, and therefore this part of his life has already in very ancient times—for the narrative bears unmistakably the stamp of high antiquity—

assumed the form of a fixed tradition. Who has not experienced in his own case that in long, monotonous periods of time, in which reminiscences float promiscuously and blur one another, the early beginnings, the days of freshness and self-adjustment, usually preserve themselves clear in the memory?

We cannot read the beginning of the narrative referred to without calling to mind the story in our gospels. There Jesus, before He begins openly to teach, spends forty days fasting in the wilderness, 'and was tempted of Satan; and He was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto Him.' So Buddha also, before he sets out to propagate his doctrine, remains four times seven days fasting in the neighbourhood of the tree of knowledge, 'enjoying the happiness of deliverance.' The idea which underlies this is readily understood: after a severe struggle the victory has been won: it is natural that the victor, before he betakes himself to new conflicts, should pause to enjoy what he had won, that the delivered, before he preaches deliverance to

others, should himself taste its happiness.

Buddha spends the first seven days, wrapt in meditation, under the sacred tree itself. During the night following the seventh day, he causes his mind to pass through the concatenation of causes and effects, from which the pain of existence arises: 'From ignorance come conformations; from conformations comes consciousness'—and so on through a long series of intervening links, until, 'from desire comes clinging to existence; from clinging to existence, comes being: from being comes birth: from birth comes old age and death, pain and mourning, suffering, sorrow, and despair.' But if the first cause be removed, on which this chain of effects hangs, ignorance becomes extinct, and everything which arises from it collapses, and all suffering is overcome. 'Realising this the Exalted One at that time spoke these words:

"When the conditions of existence reveal themselves

To the ardent, contemplating Brahman,

Then must every doubt give way,
When the origin of all becoming is revealed
to him."

"Three times, in the three watches of the night, he caused his mind to pass through all this series of causes and effects: at last he spoke thus:

"When the conditions of existence reveal themselves

To the ardent, contemplating Brahman,
He casts to earth the tempter's hosts,
Like the sun, which sheds its light through space."

"Then Buddha rose, when the seven days had passed, from the meditation in which he had been absorbed, left the spot under the tree of knowledge, and went to the fig-tree Ajapâla, tree of the goat-herds."

Another and probably later cast of this tradition here inserts an account of a temptation: just as on Jesus also Satan made an attack, when He spent those forty days in the wilderness, trying, before He should enter on His career, to make Him unfaithful to His calling as the Saviour.

It would be going too far if we were to suppose that there is preserved to us in the Buddhist tradition the memory of single and specific visions of good and evil spirits, with which Buddha professed to have had intercourse: but it is beyond doubt that he himself and his disciples shared the beliefs of all the Indian world in such appearances, and that they were convinced that they had seen the like.

Mâra, the tempter, knows that fear or lust can have no further influence over Buddha: he had vanquished all earthly thoughts and emotions under the tree of knowledge. To undo this victory is impossible, but there is one thing still left which the tempter may effect; he may induce Buddha to turn his back at this stage on earthly life and to enter into Nirvâna. Then he alone would be delivered from Mâra's power: he would not have proclaimed the doctrine of deliverance to men.

'Then came'—thus Buddha afterwards relates the history of this temptation to his disciple Ânanda—'Mâra, the wicked one,

unto me. Coming up to me, he placed himself at my side: standing at my side, Ânanda, Mâra, the wicked one, spake unto me, saying: "Enter now into Nirvâna, Exalted One, enter Nirvâna, Perfect One: now is the time of Nirvâna arrived for the Exalted One." As he thus spake, I replied, Ânanda, to Mâra, the wicked one, saying: "I shall not enter Nirvâna, thou wicked one,

until I shall have gained monks as my disciples, who are wise and instructed, intelligent hearers of the word, acquainted with the doctrine, experts in the Doctrine and the second Doctrine, versed in the ordinances, walking in the Law, to propagate, teach, promulgate, explain, formulate, analyse, what they have heard from their master, to annihilate and exterminate by their knowledge any heresy which arises, and preach the doctrine with wonder-working. I shall not enter Nirvâna, thou wicked one, until I shall have gained nuns as my disciples, who are both wise and instructed,"—and here, after the fashion of the Buddhist ecclesiastical style, what has been said of monks follows about

nuns, lay brothers, and lay sisters. "I shall not enter Nirvâna, thou wicked one, until the life of holiness which I point out, has been successful, grown in favour, and extended among all mankind, and is in vogue and thoroughly made known to all men."

We return to the older version of the narrative.

Buddha still tarries thrice seven days in various places in the neighbourhood of the tree of knowledge 'enjoying the happiness of deliverance.' A sort of overture is here played to the great drama of which he is to be the hero: significant typical occurrences foreshadow the future. The meeting with a 'Brahman of haughty air,' causes us to think of a struggle with and conquest of Brahmanism. We hear nothing of the taunt with which that Brahman may have accosted Buddha: it is only reported that he puts this question to him: 'wherein, O Gotama, consists the nature of the Brahman, and what are the qualities which make a man a Brahman?' Buddha had, thinking of himself, spoken in that speech under the

tree of knowledge of the Brahman; to whose ardent mind the procession of destiny reveals itself: a Brahman now disputes with him, the heir of worldly rank, the right to claim the title of a Brahman. Buddha tells him: he is a true Brahman who has put away all evil from himself, who knows nothing of contempt, nothing of impurity, a conqueror of self.

Human attacks have no power against Buddha: but the raging of the elements is also unable to disturb the abiding peaceful repose which is his. Storms arise; for seven continuous days rain falls in torrents; cold, tempest, and darkness surround him. Mucalinda, the serpent-king, comes from his hidden realm, enfolds Buddha's body in a sevenfold covering with his serpent coils, and protects him from the storm. 'And after seven days, when the serpent-king, Mucalinda, saw that the sky had become clear and cloudless, he loosed his coils from the body of the Exalted, concealed his serpent form, assumed the guise of a young man, and stepped before the Exalted One, worshipping

him with folded hands. Seeing this, the Exalted One at this time spoke these words :
 " Happy the solitude of the peaceful, who knows and beholds truth ;

Happy is he who stands firmly unmoved,
 who holds himself in check at all times.
 Happy he whose every sorrow, whose every wish is at an end.

The conquest of the stubbornness of the ego-ity is truly the supreme happiness."

A genuine Buddhist picture : the deliverer of the world, who, amid the raging of tempests, wrapped in a seven-fold casing by a serpent's body, enjoys the happiness of solitary repose.

Here follows the first meeting with men who honour him as Buddha. Two merchants come passing that way on a journey : a deity, who had been in earthly life related to the merchants, announces to them the nearness of Buddha, and prompts them to feed Buddha. The deities, who rule over the four quarters of the earth, present to him a bowl—for the perfect Buddhas accept no food except in a bowl—and he partakes of what

the merchants give him, the first nourishment which he takes after long fasting.

‘But the merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika, when they saw that the Exalted One, when his repast was over, had washed his bowl and his hands, bowed their heads to the feet of the Exalted One, and spake to the Exalted One, saying : “we who are here, O sire, take refuge in the Exalted One and in his Doctrine : may the Exalted One accept us as his adherents from this day forward throughout our life, we who have taken our refuge in him.” These were the first persons in the world who made their profession of the faith with the two words’—namely, the faith in the Buddha and his Doctrine, for as yet, the third member of the Buddhist triad, the Order, had not come into existence.

In this overture to the history of Buddha’s labours we miss one element : a typical adumbration of the most prominent task of his life, the preaching of the doctrine of deliverance, and of the coming out of persons from among all classes to follow him in mendicant attire. Those two merchants take refuge in

Buddha and the Doctrine, and nevertheless the Doctrine has not yet been preached to them. The narrative which now follows has to do with the motive, in which all this seeming inconsistency finds its explanation. It is one thing to have realised for one's self the truth of deliverance, and another to proclaim it to the world. Buddha has accomplished the first: the resolution to do the second is not yet firmly fixed within him: apprehensions and doubt remain to be overcome before he adopts this resolve.

I shall here let the text speak for itself.

'Into the mind of the Exalted One, while he tarried, retired in solitude, came this thought: "I have penetrated this deep truth, which is difficult to perceive, and difficult to understand, peace-giving, sublime, which transcends all thought, deeply-significant, which only the wise can grasp. Man moves in an earthly sphere, in an earthly sphere he has his place and finds his enjoyment. For man, who moves in an earthly sphere, and has his place and finds his enjoyment in an earthly sphere, it will be very difficult to grasp this

matter, the law of causality, the chain of causes and effects: and this also will be very difficult for him to grasp, the extinction of all conformations, the withdrawal from all that is earthly, the extinction of desire, the cessation of longing, the end, the Nirvâna. Should I now preach the Doctrine and mankind not understand me, it would bring me nothing but fatigue, it would cause me nothing but trouble!" And there passed unceasingly through the mind of the Exalted One, this voice, which no one had ever before heard. "Why reveal to the world what I have won by a severe struggle?
The truth remains hidden from him whom desire and hate absorb.

**It is difficult, mysterious, deep, hidden
from the coarse mind;
He cannot apprehend it, whose mind earthly
vocations surround with night."**

**'When the Exalted One thought thus, his
heart was inclined to abide in quietude and
not to proclaim the Doctrine. Then Brahma
Sahampati with his thought perceived the
thought of the Holy One and said thus to**

himself: "Truly the world is lost, truly the world is undone, if the heart of the Perfect One, the holy, highest Buddha, be bent on abiding in quietude and not preaching the Doctrine."

'Then Brahma Sahampati left the heaven of Brahma as quickly as a strong man stretches out his bent arm or bends his outstretched arm, and he appeared before the Exalted One. Then Brahma Sahampati made bare one of his shoulders from under his robe, bowed his right knee to the earth, raised his folded hands to the Exalted One, and spake to the Exalted One thus: "May it please, O sire, the Exalted One, to preach the Doctrine, may it please the Perfect One to preach the Doctrine. There are beings, who are pure from the dust of the earthly, but if they hear not the preaching of the Doctrine, they are lost: they will be believers of the Doctrine." Thus spake Brahma Sahampati; when he had spoken thus, he went on to say:

"In the land of Magadha there arose before

A doctrine of impure beings, sinful men.

Open thou, O Wise One, the door of eternity,

Let be heard what thou, O Sinless One, hast discovered.

Who stands above high on the mountain's rocky summit,

His eye looks afar over all people.

So mount thou also, O Wise One, up where on high

Far over the land stand out the battlements of truth,

And look down, Painless One, on mankind,
The suffering creatures whom birth and old age torture,

Rise, rise, thou valiant hero, rich in victories,
Go through the world, sinless preacher of the path,

Raise thy voice, O sire; many shall understand thy word."

Buddha sets the solicitation of Brahma against the doubts and apprehensions, which made the preaching of the truth appear to him to be a fruitless undertaking. Brahma repeats his request three times: at last Buddha grants it:

'As on a lotus stalk some water-roses, blue lotus flowers, white lotus flowers, gener-

ated in the water, growing up in the water, rise not out of the water, but bloom in the deep—other water-roses, blue lotus flowers, white lotus flowers, generated in the water, growing up in the water, rise up to the surface of the water—and other water-roses, blue lotus flowers, white lotus flowers, generated in the water, growing up in the water, rise up out of the water and the water damps not their blossoms: so likewise, when the Exalted One surveyed the universe with the glance of a Buddha, he saw beings whose souls were pure, and whose souls were not pure, from the dust of the earthly, with sharp faculties and with dull faculties, with noble natures and with ignoble natures, good hearers and wicked hearers, many who lived in fear of the world to come and of sin. When he saw this, he spake to Brahma Sahampati these words:

“Let opened be to all the door of eternity;
He who hath ears, let him hear the word
and believe.

I thought of affliction for myself, therefore
have I, O Brahma,

Not yet proclaimed the noble word to the world."

'Then Brahma Sahampati perceived: The Exalted One has answered my prayer. He will preach the Doctrine. Then he bowed before the Exalted One, walked round him respectfully and vanished.'

Thus has the legend conducted its hero to victory over the very last obstacle which stood between him and his calling as a deliverer, to victory over all doubt and dismay: the resolution to proclaim to the world the knowledge, in which he had himself found peace, now stands unshaken.

THE SERMON AT BENARES

Who should be the first to hear the new gospel? Legend makes Buddha think first of all of the two teachers, to whose guidance he had first confided himself as a disciple. If he were to preach his doctrine to them, they would understand him. A deity brings him the intelligence that they are both dead.

Perhaps they were really so ; in any case, the meaning of this touch in the legend is clear. No one could have a higher claim than those two to be the first hearers of the gospel. It would have been ingratitude if Buddha had not made them before all others participators of his self-acquired treasure. But no one knew anything of his having done so : and others were known to be or said to be the first converts. These two were therefore represented as being no longer alive when Buddha began to preach his doctrine.

Could those, who had once been Buddha's teachers, not turn to him as his first disciples, yet the quondam partners of his quest and struggle, those five ascetics, could, who had long vied with him in penances, and had forsaken him when they saw that he gave up the pursuit of salvation by self-mortification. They are staying at Benares, and our narrative represents Buddha as now wandering thither. It is quite possible that tradition here rests on old and trustworthy memories. Benares has at all times been regarded by the Buddhists as the town in

which the gospel of deliverance was first heard and believed.

We reserve for a later passage the attempt to give a connected description of the manner in which Buddha preached his doctrine, what chords he was wont to strike in his hearers. In this place we merely give the old narrative. It shows us its hero now, at the beginning of his career, already wholly the same as it makes him appear to be throughout his long life. The monks, to whom we owe these notices, could not depict internal becoming, nor could they invent internal becoming, for they did not know what internal becoming is; and, even had they known it, how could they admit internal becoming in the case of the Perfect One, who had discovered for himself the path from the world of sorrowful becoming into the world of happy being?

The history of the first discourse of Buddha at Benares runs, in the solemn circumstantial narrative style which is peculiar to the sacred writings of the Buddhists, thus:

‘And the Exalted One, wandering from place to place, came to Benares, to the deer-park Isipatana, where the five ascetics dwelt. Then the five ascetics saw the Exalted One approaching from a distance: when they saw him, they said to one another: “Friends, yonder comes the ascetic Gotama, who lives in self-indulgence, who has given up his quest, and returned to self-indulgence. We shall show him no respect, not rise up before him, not take his alms-bowl and his cloak from him: but we shall give him a seat, and he can sit down, if he likes.”

‘But the nearer and nearer the Exalted One came to the five ascetics, the less could the five ascetics abide by their resolution: they went up to the Exalted One: one took from the Exalted One his alms-bowl and cloak: another brought him a seat: a third gave him water to wash his feet and a footstool. The Exalted One sat down on the seat which was set for him: when he had sat down, the Exalted One washed his feet.

‘Now they addressed the Exalted One by

his name and called him "Friend." When they addressed him thus, the Exalted One said to the five ascetics: "Ye monks, address not the Perfect One by his name and call him not 'Friend.' The Perfect One, O monks, is the holy, supreme Buddha. Open ye your ears, O monks; the deliverance from death is found: I teach you, I preach the Law. If ye walk according to my teaching, ye shall be partakers in a short time of that for which noble youths leave their homes and go into homelessness, the highest end of religious effort; ye shall even in this present life apprehend the truth itself and see face to face."

'When he spake thus, the five ascetics said to the Exalted One: "If thou hast not been able, friend Gotama, by that course, by those mortifications of the body, to attain superhuman perfection, the full supremacy of the knowledge and contemplation of sacred things, how wilt thou now, when thou livest in self-indulgence, when thou hast given up thy effort, and returned to self-indulgence, attain superhuman perfection, the full su-

premacy of the knowledge and contemplation of sacred things?"

'When they said this, the Exalted One spake to the five ascetics: "O monks, the Perfect One liveth not in self-indulgence: he has not given up his effort and returned to self-indulgence. The Perfect One, O monks, is the holy, supreme Buddha. Open ye your ears, ye monks; the deliverance from death is found: I teach you, I preach the Law. If ye walk according to my teaching, ye shall be partakers in a short time of that for which noble youths leave their homes and go into homelessness, the highest end of religious effort: ye shall even in the present life apprehend the truth itself and see face to face."

They repeat the same dialogue a second and a third time.

'When they said this, the Exalted One spake to the five ascetics: "Tell me, ye monks, have I ever before addressed you in these terms?"

"Sire, thou hast not."

"The Perfect One, O monks, is the holy, highest Buddha. Open ye your ears, ye

monks, the deliverance from death is found," etc.

'Then the five ascetics hearkened once more to the Exalted One. They opened their ears and directed their thoughts to knowledge.

'Then the Exalted One spake to the five ascetics, saying: "There are two extremes, O monks, from which he who leads a religious life must abstain. What are those two extremes? One is a life of pleasure, devoted to desire and enjoyment: that is base, ignoble, unspiritual, unworthy, unreal. The other is a life of mortification: it is gloomy, unworthy, unreal. The Perfect One, O monks, is removed from both those extremes and has discovered the way which lies between them, the middle way which enlightens the eyes, enlightens the mind, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna. And what, O monks, is this middle way, which the Perfect One has discovered, which enlightens the eye and enlightens the spirit, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna? It is this sacred,

eightfold path, as it is called: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Self-concentration. This, O monks, is the middle way, which the Perfect One has discovered, which enlightens the eye and enlightens the spirit, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of suffering: Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unloved is suffering, to be separated from the loved is suffering, not to obtain what one desires is suffering, in short the fivefold clinging to the earthly is suffering.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst for being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there: the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering: the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire,

monks, the deliverance from death is found," etc.

'Then the five ascetics hearkened once more to the Exalted One. They opened their ears and directed their thoughts to knowledge.

'Then the Exalted One spake to the five ascetics, saying: "There are two extremes, O monks, from which he who leads a religious life must abstain. What are those two extremes? One is a life of pleasure, devoted to desire and enjoyment: that is base, ignoble, unspiritual, unworthy, unreal. The other is a life of mortification: it is gloomy, unworthy, unreal. The Perfect One, O monks, is removed from both those extremes and has discovered the way which lies between them, the middle way which enlightens the eyes, enlightens the mind, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna. And what, O monks, is this middle way, which the Perfect One has discovered, which enlightens the eye and enlightens the spirit, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna? It is this sacred,

eightfold path, as it is called: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Self-concentration. This, O monks, is the middle way, which the Perfect One has discovered, which enlightens the eye and enlightens the spirit, which leads to rest, to knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvâna.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of suffering: Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unloved is suffering, to be separated from the loved is suffering, not to obtain what one desires is suffering, in short the fivefold clinging to the earthly is suffering.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst for being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there: the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering: the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire,

letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving it no room.

“This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the path which leads to the extinction of suffering: it is this sacred, eightfold path, to wit: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Self-concentration.

“This is the sacred truth of suffering; thus my eye, O monks, was opened to these conceptions, which no one had comprehended before, and my judgment, cognition, intuition, and vision were opened. ‘It is necessary to understand this sacred truth of suffering.’ —‘I have comprehended this sacred truth of suffering.’ Thus, O monks, my eye was opened to these conceptions, which no one had comprehended before, and my judgment, cognition, intuition, and vision were opened.”

Then follow similar passages regarding the other three truths.

“And as long, O monks, as I did not possess in perfect clearness this triple, twelve-part, trustworthy knowledge and understand-

ing of these four sacred truths, so long, O monks, I knew that I had not yet attained the supreme Buddhahood in this world, and the worlds of gods, of Mâra and of Brahma, among all beings, ascetics and Brahmans, gods and men. But since, O monks, I have come to possess in perfect clearness this triple, twelve-part, trustworthy knowledge and understanding of these four sacred truths, since then I know, O monks, that I have attained the supreme Buddhahood in this world, and in the worlds of gods, of Mâra and of Brahma; among all beings, ascetics and Brahmans, gods and men. And I have seen and know this: the deliverance of my soul is secured: this is my last birth: henceforth there is for me no new birth."

'Thus spake the Exalted One: the five ascetics joyfully received the words of the Exalted One.'

This is the sermon at Benares, which tradition gives as the opening of the ministry of Buddha, by which he, as his disciples expressed themselves, 'has set in motion the wheel of the law.' One may entertain whatever

opinion he pleases regarding the historical truth with which this sermon is reported—I am inclined, for my part, to entertain no very high opinion of it—but even the more freely concocted one may take this discourse to be, only the more highly must he rate its fundamental importance, for he is so much the more certain here to find, if not the words actually spoken on the occasion of a definite occurrence, at anyrate the ideas which the ancient Church regarded, and certainly not improperly regarded, as the real lever in the preaching of their master. Clearly and sharply defined are the leading thoughts, which stand in the middle of the contracted solemn thought-world, in which the Buddhist

Church lived: in the centre of all one sole idea, the idea of deliverance. Of deliverance, of that from which we are to be delivered, of the way in which we shall be delivered, of this and of nothing else: does this sermon of Buddha's, and, we may add, do the sermons of Buddha as a rule, treat. God and the universe trouble not the Buddhist: he knows only one question: how shall I in this world

of suffering be delivered from suffering? We shall have to return to the answer which the sermon at Benares gives to this question.

When Buddha finishes his discourse, there rises from earth through all the worlds of gods the cry, that at Benares the Holy One has set in motion the wheel of the law. The five ascetics, headed by Kondañña, who has hence obtained the name of Kondañña, the Knower, beg Buddha to initiate them as students of his doctrine, and he does so in these words: 'Come near, O monks; well preached is the doctrine: walk in purity to make an end of all suffering.' Thus is founded the Church of Buddha's followers: the five are its first, as yet its only, members. A fresh discourse of Buddha's, on the instability and impermanence of everything earthly, causes the souls of the five disciples to obtain the condition of sinless purity. 'At this time,' thus ends this narrative, 'there were six holy persons in the world'—Buddha himself and these five disciples.

FURTHER CONVERSIONS TO BUDDHA

THE number of believers soon increases. The next convert is Yasa, a scion of a wealthy house at Benares: his parents and his wife likewise hear Buddha's discourses and become adherents of the faith as a lay-brother and lay-sister. Numerous friends of Yasa, youths of the most prominent houses in Benares and the country round about, adopt the monastic life. The company of the faithful soon reaches sixty members. Buddha sends them forth to preach the law throughout the country. In nothing did the secret of the great power of rapid increase, which existed in the young Church, so much lie as in its itinerancy: here anon, there anon, appearing, vanishing, simultaneously at a thousand places. 'O disciples,' thus in our authorities run the words with which Buddha sends out his followers, 'I am loosed from all bands, divine and human. Ye also, O disciples, are loosed from all bands, divine and human. Go ye out, O disciples, and travel from place to place for the welfare of many people, for the joy of many people,

in pity for the world, for the blessing, welfare, and joy of gods and men. Go not in twos to one place. Preach, O disciples, the law, the beginning of which is noble, the middle of which is noble, and the end of which is noble, in spirit and in letter: preach the whole and full, pure path of holiness. There are beings, who are pure from the dust of the earthly, but if they hear not the gospel of the law, they perish: they shall understand the law. But I, O disciples, go to Uruvelâ, to the village of the general, to preach the law.'

At Uruvelâ there reside Brahman hermits, a thousand in number, who keep alight the sacred fire of sacrifice according to the rites of the Vedas, and perform their ablutions in the river Neranjarâ. Three brothers, Brahmans, of the Kassapa family, are the leaders of these ascetics. Buddha comes to one of them and overcomes with miraculous power the terrible serpent-king, who dwelt in Kassapa's sacrificial chamber. The Brahmans wonder-struck persuade him to spend the winter with them. He stops there, dwelling in the forest near Kassapa's hermitage, in which he takes

his food every day. Miracle after miracle convinces the Brahmans of his greatness: gods come to listen to his discourses; they shine like flaming fire all night long. Kassapa, overcome with wonder, admits the superhuman greatness of his guest, but he cannot bring himself to submit to him. 'Thus the Exalted One,' as our old narrative states in this connection, 'thought within himself: "this simpleton will long continue thinking: 'the great Sumana is very powerful and mighty, but he is not holy as I am.' So then, I shall work on this hermit's heart." Therefore the Exalted One spake to the hermit Kassapa of Uruvelâ: "Thou art not holy, Kassapa, nor hast thou found the path of holiness: and thou knowest nothing of the way by which thou canst be holy and mayest reach the path of holiness." Then the hermit Kassapa, of Uruvelâ, bowed his head to the feet of the Exalted One, and said to the Exalted One: "Grant me, O sire, to receive the degrees of initiation, the lower and the higher."

All narratives of conversions in the Buddhist scriptures resemble this narrative

more or less. Where any attempt at individuality is made, it turns out clumsy and poor. That earnest, deep feeling, and the impulse of strong emotion was not denied to these minds, is amply proved by the poetry of the Buddhists. But describe they could not, and what they were least capable of understanding was individual life.

Kassapa's two brothers and all the bands of hermits round them turn to Buddha and adopt monastic garb. Thus the number of believers is at one stroke raised to a thousand.

They now wander from Uruvelâ to Râjagaha, the near-lying capital of the Magadha kingdom. The halting-place is in a bambu-thicket outside the town. The young king Bimbisâra hears of Buddha's arrival, and goes out with a vast following of citizens and Brahmans to make the acquaintance of the teacher who had acquired sudden fame. When the people saw Buddha and Kassapa together, doubts arose as to which of the two is master and which is the disciple. Kassapa rises from his seat, bows his head to Buddha's feet and says: 'Sire, my master is the Ex-

alted One: I am his pupil. Sire, my master is the Exalted One: I am his pupil.' Buddha preaches before the king and his retinue: Bimbisâra, with a great number of his people, declares himself a lay convert of Buddha's Church. Thenceforth throughout his long life he became one of the truest friends and patrons of Buddha and his doctrine.

Tradition informs us that on that occasion at Rājagaha Buddha also gained as disciples those two men, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, who came later on to be honoured as the first in rank after their master in the circles of the Church. These two young men, bound to each other by close ties of friendship, sons of a Brahman family, were at that time residing at Rājagaha as pupils of Sanjaya, one of the itinerant mendicants and teachers so numerous in that age. In their common pursuit of spiritual possessions, they had, as is related, given each other this promise, that he who would first obtain the deliverance from death, should tell the other. One day Sāriputta saw one of Buddha's disciples, Assaji, walking the streets of Rājagaha to collect alms, peaceful

and dignified, with downcast look. 'When he saw him,' our narrative here informs us, 'he thought: "truly this is one of those monks who are already sanctified in this world, or have attained the path of purity. I shall go up to this monk and I shall ask him: 'Friend, in whose name hast thou renounced the world? and who is thy master? and whose doctrine dost thou recognise?'" But then Sâriputta, the mendicant, reflected: "Now is not the time to ask this monk. He is going from house to house and is collecting alms. I shall approach this monk, as one approaches a person from whom he desires something." But when the venerable Assaji had collected alms at Râjagaha, he took the contributions he had received and turned back. Thereupon the mendicant Sâriputta approached the venerable Assaji: arrived near him, he saluted the venerable Assaji. After he had exchanged words of friendly salutation with him, he placed himself near him. Standing near him, the mendicant Sâriputta addressed the venerable Assaji, saying: "Thy visage, friend, is luminous, thy colour is pure and clear. In

whose name, friend, hast thou renounced the world? and who is thy master? and whose doctrine dost thou recognise?" "It is the great Samana, my friend, the Sakya's son, who comes from the Sakya's house and has renounced the world. In his name, the Exalted One's, I have renounced the world, and he, the Exalted One, is my master, and his law, the Exalted One's, I recognise." "And what, friend, does thy master say, and what does he teach?" "Friend, I am but a novice; it is not long since I left the world; I have only recently conformed to this doctrine and this order. I cannot expound the doctrine to thee in its fulness, but I can tell thee its spirit briefly." Then the mendicant Sâriputta said to the venerable Assaji: "Be it so, friend. Tell me little or much, but tell me its spirit: I have a longing to know the spirit only: what great care canst thou have for the letter?" Then the venerable Assaji addressed to the mendicant Sâriputta this statement of the doctrine:

“Existences which flow from a cause, their cause the Perfect One teaches, and how they

end: this is the doctrine of the great Samana.”

And when the mendicant Sâriputta heard this statement of the doctrine, he obtained the clear, undimmed vision of the truth, and he perceived: ‘Whatever is subject to the law of beginning, all that is also subject to the law of decay.’ And he said to Assaji: ‘If the doctrine be nothing else but this, thou hast at anyrate attained the condition in which there is no suffering. That which hath not been seen by many myriads of bygone ages, hath in these days come near unto us.’

Sâriputta now goes to his friend Moggallâna. ‘Thy visage, friend,’ says Moggallâna, ‘is luminous, thy colour is pure and clear. Hast thou found the deliverance from death?’ ‘Yes, friend, I have found the deliverance from death!’ And he tells him of his meeting with Assaji, and on Moggallâna also ‘the clear, undimmed light of truth’ dawns. Sanjaya, their instructor, in vain begs them to remain with him. They go with great crowds of ascetics into the wood where Buddha is resting: but a hot stream of blood bursts from Sanjaya’s

mouth. Buddha sees the two coming: he announces to those around him that those are now approaching who should be the foremost and noblest among his disciples. And the two of them receive the initiation from Buddha himself.

‘At this time,’ continues our narrative, ‘many distinguished and noble youths of the Magadha territory joined themselves to Buddha, to lead a pure life. On this the populace became displeased, murmured, and were angry, saying: “The ascetic Gotama is come to bring childlessness: the ascetic Gotama is come to bring widowhood: the ascetic Gotama is come to bring subversion of families. Already hath he turned the thousand hermits into his disciples, and he hath made the two hundred and fifty mendicant followers of Sanjaya his disciples, and now these many distinguished and noble youths of the Magadha kingdom are betaking themselves to the ascetic Gotama to lead a religious life.” And whenever the people saw any of the disciples they taunted them with these words:

“The great monk came in his travels to the capital of Magadha, seated on a hill.

He has converted all Sanjaya’s followers, whom will he draw after him to-day?”

‘The disciples then learned how the populace was displeased, murmured, and was angry: and the disciples told the Exalted One. “This excitement, O disciples,” said the Exalted One, “will not last long. Seven days will it last: after seven days will it vanish. But ye, my disciples, if they taunt you with the saying :

“The great monk came in his travels to the capital of Magadha, seated on a hill.

He has converted all Sanjaya’s followers, whom will he draw after him to-day?”

answer them with these words :

“The heroes, the perfect ones, convert by their true discourse ;

Who will reproach the Enlightened One who converts by the power of truth ?”’

Have we really here a pair of those rhymes before us, such as they were probably bandied at that time between the friends and foes of

the young teacher among the gossiping populace of the streets of the capital?

With the history of the conversion of those two most prominent of his disciples, and the account of the soon-allayed discontent of the people at Rājagaha, the connected narrative of Buddha's career breaks off, again to unite but once more, where the memory had to be fastened on the last wanderings of the aged teacher, on his parting utterances, and his death. For the long period which lies between that beginning and the end, a period, as we are told, of more than four decades, there is in our tradition, at least in that which deserves this name, nothing in the way of a continuous description, but merely collections of countless real or feigned addresses, dialogues, and sayings of Buddha, to which is annexed a short note regarding the external circumstances of place and company, which led to these utterances.

To outward view it is a uniform life which lies before us in this uni-coloured tradition, and that wherein alone the true history of this life lay, the inner current of being with

its ebb and flow, its coming and its going, is hidden from us. When and how the picture of the world and life comes to assume in Buddha's mind the form in which it presented itself to his followers, in what order above all his convictions regarding himself and his mission developed themselves within him, how far the prejudices of the Indian people and the criticism of the Indian schools eventually reacted on Buddha's thought and inclination,—even to ask these questions nobody who looks to our authorities will be bold enough. Of this we shall never learn anything: we cannot.

What we can do is, without attempting to draw any distinction of early and later periods, merely to unite the different features which tradition places at our disposal, so as to form a connected picture, a picture of Buddha's teaching and life, of his intercourse with high and low, of the circle of disciples gathered round him, and of the wider circles of partisans and antagonists.

Can we hope to attain historical truth in such a picture?

Yes, and No.

No: for this picture shows us only the type of ancient Buddhist life, but not the individual characteristics which belonged to Buddha and him only, as peculiarly his own, in the sense that we have a picture of Socrates which truly resembles Socrates only and no one else, even no Socratic.

Still this, which on the one hand indicates a want in our knowledge, gives us on the other hand, however, a ground for trusting it.

India is altogether a land of types, not of individualities stamped with their own dies. Life begins and passes away there, as the plant blooms and withers, subject to the dull rule of the laws of Nature; and the laws of Nature can produce nothing but typical forms. Only where the breath of freedom floats are those proud forces of manhood unfettered, which enable man to become, and dare to become, something individual, like himself alone. Thus on all pictures in the Indian epics, despite their splendid colouring, there lies that strange torpor which makes men look like spectres, to which the draught of

vivifying blood had been denied: and this effect is owing to this cause above all others, that the domain of this poetry does not extend to the point where the particularly characteristic life of the individual begins. This range was closed to Indian poetry because the Indian peoples themselves were denied the power to develop individualities. And in the same way in the history of Indian thought, there also the power at work is not the individual mind, but always merely the great Indian folk-mind, that which the Indians, if questioned regarding the origin of their sacred writings, denominate the sacred Vedic spirit. Through all there operates an unindividual universal mind, and the individual bears only those marks with which the universal mind has endowed him.

Are we not to believe that this same law has also governed the beginnings of Buddhist life? The great disciples, who clustered round the Master, Sâriputta and Moggallâna, Upâli, and Ânanda, completely resemble each other in the old narratives, and their picture is nothing else but the invariably uni-

form copy of Buddha himself, only on a reduced scale. The reality was hardly much otherwise: the individual was little more than a specimen, which the general spirit disclosed to view, and this general spirit again was, with reference to the forms in which it outwardly displayed itself, scarcely intrinsically different from the spirit of Buddha himself and the forms among which Buddha's life was passed.

Furthermore, the period between Buddha and the fixing of our traditions regarding him was in nothing so deficient as in minds capable of giving a new direction to the great movement, or of stamping it with the impress of their own life: the ancient Buddhist Church had not a Paul. But in this we have a guarantee that this movement, as it is sketched for us, is in its essence the same as Buddha and his first disciples made it. True, Buddha may have had many a noble mark of intellect and of creative power, which the puny natures, by which his picture has been preserved to us, have reduced to their own lower level, but a form like his

can certainly not be fundamentally misconceived.

Thus, though only a few touches of the picture presented to us by tradition can be said to be absolutely reliable, in the sense of historically exact, still we shall have a right to look upon this picture itself in its entirety as reliable in a higher sense.

BUDDHA'S DAILY LIFE

FROM year to year the change from a period of wandering to a period of rest and retirement repeated itself for Buddha and his disciples. In the month of June when, after the dry scorching heat of the Indian summer, clouds come up in towering masses, and the rolling thunders herald the approach of the rain-bearing monsoon, the Indian to-day, as in ages past, prepares himself and his house for the time during which all usual operations are interrupted by the rain: for whole weeks long in many places the pouring torrents confine the inhabitants to their huts, or at any

rate to their villages, while communication with neighbours is cut off by rapid, swollen streams, and by inundations. 'The birds,' says an ancient Buddhist work, 'build their nests on the tops of trees: and there they nestle and hide during the damp season.' And thus also it was in those days an established practice with the members of monastic orders, undoubtedly not first in Buddha's time, but since ever there was a system of religious itinerancy in India, to suspend itinerant operations during the three rainy months and to spend this time in quiet retirement in the neighbourhood of towns and villages, where sure support was to be found through the charity of believers. To this custom they adhered all the more strongly because they could not, during the rainy season, which, after the scorching heat of summer, calls everywhere into being an infinite variety of vegetable and animal life, travel about, without infringing at every step the commandment which forbids the destruction of even the lowest form of life.

Buddha also every year for three months

'kept vassa, rainy season,' surrounded by groups of his disciples, who flocked together to pass the rainy season near their teacher. Kings and wealthy men contended for the honour of entertaining him and his disciples, who were with him, as guests during this season in the hospices and gardens which they had provided for the community.

The rains being over, the itinerating began : Buddha went from town to town and village to village, always attended by a great concourse of disciples: the texts are wont to speak in one place of three hundred, and in another of five hundred, who followed their master. In the main streets, through which the religious pilgrims like travelling merchants used to pass, the believers who dwelt near had taken ample care to provide shelter, to which Buddha and his disciples might resort: or, where monks who professed the doctrine dwelt, there was sure to be found lodging for the night in their abodes, and even if no other cover was to be had, there was no want of mango or banyan trees, at the feet of which the band might halt for the night.

The territory through which these wandering excursions generally extended was the circuit of the 'Eastern Land'—i.e. chiefly the old kingdoms of Kāsi-Kosala and Magadha, with the neighbouring free states, the territories known to-day as Oudh and Bihar. Contrasted with this were the kingdoms of 'Western Hindostan,' the ancient seat of Vedic culture and of the exclusive power of a Brahman order strongly opposed to the religious influences of the East, affected, it is true, if tradition rightly inform us, by the itinerant ministrations of Buddha, but still only seldom and superficially. The most important headquarters during these wanderings, at the same time the approximately extreme points, to the north-west and south-east, of the area, in which Buddha's pilgrim-life was passed, are the capital cities of the kings of Kosala and Magadha, Sāvatti, now Sahet Mahet on the Rapti, and Rājagaha, now Rajgir, south of Bihar. In the immediate neighbourhood of these towns the community possessed numerous pleasant gardens, in which structures of various kinds

were erected for the requirements of the members. 'Not too far from, nor yet too near the town,' thus runs the standard description of such a park given in the sacred texts, 'well provided with entrances and exits, easily accessible to all people who inquire after it, with not too much of the bustle of life by day, quiet by night, far from commotion and the crowds of men, a place of retirement, a good spot for solitary meditation.' Such a garden was the Veluvana, 'Bambu-grove,' once a pleasure ground of king Bimbisâra and presented by him to Buddha and the Church: another was the still more renowned Jetavana, at Sâvatthi, a gift made by Buddha's most liberal admirer, the great merchant Anâthapindika. Not alone the sacred texts, but equally also the monumental records, the reliefs of the great Stupa of Bharhut, recently explored, show how highly celebrated this gift of Anâthapindika's was from the earliest days in the Buddhist Church. It is narrated how Anâthapindika was in search of a spot which should be worthy to serve as a place of sojourn for Buddha and his disciples: the garden of

the Prince Jeta alone appeared to him to unite in itself all requirements, but the prince declined to sell it to him. After protracted negotiations Anâthapindika obtained the garden for as much gold as sufficed to cover the surface of the ground of the whole Jetavana. He gave it to Buddha, whose favourite place of sojourn it thenceforward was. Numberless passages of the sacred texts, in which the subject-matter consists of addresses and sayings of Buddha, begin: 'At this time the holy Buddha was sojourning at Sâvatthi, in the Jetavana, the garden of Anâthapindika.'

If it is possible to speak of a home in the homeless wandering life of Buddha and his disciples, places like the Veluvana and Jetavana may of all others be so called, near the great centres of Indian life and yet untouched by the turmoil of the capitals, once the quiet resting-places of rulers and nobles, before the yellow-robed mendicants appeared on the scene, and 'the Church in the four quarters, present and absent,' succeeded to the possession of the kingly inheritance. In these

gardens were the residences of the brethren, houses, halls, cloisters, storerooms, surrounded by lotus-pools, fragrant mango trees, and slender fan-palms that lift their foliage high over all else, and by the deep green foliage of the Nyagrodha tree, whose roots dropping from the air to earth become new stems, and with their cool shady arcades and leafy walks seem to invite to peaceful meditation.

These were the surroundings in which Buddha passed a great part of his life, probably the portions of it richest in effective work. Here masses of the population, lay as well as monastic, flocked together to see him and to hear him preach. Hither came pilgrim monks from far countries, who had heard the fame of Buddha's teaching, and, when the rainy season was past, undertook a pilgrimage to see the master face to face. 'It is customary,' runs an oft-recurring passage in our texts, 'for monks, when they have passed the rainy season, to set out to see the Exalted One. It is the custom of the Exalted Buddha to welcome monks who come from afar.' 'Is it

well with you, monks ?' Buddha is accustomed to ask the arrivals. 'Are you able to live ? Have you passed the rains in peace and unity, and without discord, and have you experienced any want of support ?'

We hear, for instance, of one of the faithful named Sona, in the land of Avanti, far from the country in which Buddha lived, whom the fame of the new doctrine had reached, and there arose in him the desire to be received among its professors. Three long years he had to wait until he succeeded in bringing together in this distant land the ten monks, whose presence was indispensable to conferring the orders on a new member. Once, when he was in solitude, there occurred to him the thought : 'I have, it is true, heard of the Exalted One, he is so and so, but I have not seen him face to face. I will go to behold him, the exalted, holy, highest Buddha, if my teacher allows me to go.' And his teacher, to whom he expressed his wish, answered him : 'Good, Sona, good : go, Sona, to behold him, the exalted, holy, supreme Buddha. Thou shalt see him, Sona, the Ex-

alted One, the bringer of joy, the dispenser of joy, whose organs of life are placid, whose spirit is at rest, the supreme self-subduer and peace-possessor, the hero who has conquered self and watches himself, who holds his desires in check.' And Sona prepares for the journey to Sâvatthi, where Buddha is tarrying in the Jetavana, the garden of Anâthapindika.

Pilgrims of this class come together where Buddha is sojourning, and the meetings and greetings of the arriving groups with the clerical brothers who live on the spot, the interchange of news, the arrangement of lodging-places for the itinerant monks, then not unfrequently caused those noisy clamours so strange to western ears, which seem to be inseparable from such occasions in the East, and which are most earnestly deprecated more than once in the sacred texts.

The fame of Buddha's person also drew together from far and near crowds of such as stood without the narrower circles of the community. 'To the ascetic Gotama,' people remarked to one another, 'folks are coming, passing through kingdoms and countries, to

converse with him.' Often, when he happened to halt near the residences of potentates, kings, princes, and dignitaries, came on waggons or on elephants, to put questions to him or to hear his doctrine. Such a scene is described to us in the opening of the 'Sûtra on the fruit of asceticism,' and reappears in pictorial representation among the reliefs at Bharhut. The Sûtra relates how king Ajâtasattu of Magadha in the 'Lotus-night'—that is, in the full moon of October, the time when the lotus blooms—is sitting in the open air, surrounded by his nobles on the flat roof of his palace. 'Then,' as it is recorded in that text, 'the king of Magadha, Ajâtasattu, the son of the Videha princess, uttered this exclamation: "fair in sooth is this moonlight night, lovely in sooth is this moonlight night, grand in sooth is this moonlight night, heart-enchanting in sooth is this moonlight night, happy omens in sooth giveth this moonlight night. What Samana or what Brahman shall I go to hear, that my soul may be cheered when I hear him?"' One counsellor names this and another that teacher: but Jîvaka,

the king's physician, sits on in silence. 'Then the king of Magadha, Ajâtasattu, the son of Vedehî, spake to Jîvaka Komârabhacca: "Why art thou silent, friend Jîvaka?"—"Sire, in my mango grove he resteth, the exalted, holy, supreme Buddha, with a great band of disciples, with three hundred monks. Of him, the exalted Gotama, there spreadeth through the world lordly praise in these terms: He, the Exalted One, is the holy, supreme Buddha, the wise, the learned, the blessed, who knoweth the universe, the highest, who tameth man like an ox, the teacher of gods and men, the exalted Buddha. Sire, go to hear him, the Exalted One: perchance, if thou hearest him, the Exalted One, thy soul, O sire, may be refreshed"—and the king orders elephants to be prepared for himself and the queens, and the royal procession moves with burning torches on that moonlight night through the gate of Râjagaha to Jîvaka's mango grove, where Buddha is said to have held with the king the famous discourse 'On the fruits of asceticism,' at the end of which the king joined the Church as a lay-member.

The pictures, which the sacred texts give us of meetings and scenes like these, are very numerous: no doubt the concourse which moved round Buddha's person is faithfully reflected in them. If Buddha comes to the free towns, we hear of his meetings with the noble families who exercise rule there: at Kusinârâ the Mallas, the ruling family of that town, go out to meet him and issue an edict: 'whosoever goeth not to meet the Exalted One is liable to a penalty of five hundred pieces.' From the gayest of the Indian free towns, the dissolute and wealthy Vesâli, the distinguished youths of the Licchavi house drive out to Buddha with their splendid teams, some in white garments with white trimmings, and others in yellow, black, or red. Buddha says to his disciples, when he sees the Licchavi youths coming in the distance: 'who ever, my disciples, among you hath not seen the divine host of the thirty-three gods, let him gaze on the host of the Licchavis, let him behold the host of the Licchavis, let him view the host of the Licchavis.' And besides the noble youth of Vesâli, there comes driving with not

less pomp, to see Buddha, another celebrity of the town, the courtesan Ambapâli. She invites Buddha and his disciples to dine in her mango grove, and when they assemble there and dinner is over, she makes a gift of the grove to Buddha and the Church.

To complete the picture of the society which existed round Buddha, the class of dialecticians and theological disputants of all shades already flourishing prosperously in India at this period, must not be allowed to pass unnoticed: the distinguished Brahman, endowed by the king with the revenues of a village, who comes conducted by a great following, the young Brahmanical scholar, who is sent forth by his teacher, to bring him tidings of the much-spoken-of Gotama, and who is eager to win his spurs in a logical dispute with the renowned adversary, countless sophistic hair-splitters, persons of religious as well as worldly standing, who have heard that the Samana Gotama is staying in the neighbourhood, and who prepare to lay traps for him with two-edged questions and to en-

tangle him in contradiction, whatever be the answer he may give.

A frequent end of these dialogues is, of course, that the vanquished opponents or the partisans of Buddha invite him and his disciples to dine on the following day: 'Sire, may it please the Exalted One and his disciples to dine with me to-morrow.' And Buddha permits his consent to be inferred from his silence. On the following day about noon, when dinner is ready, the host sends word to Buddha: 'Sire, it is time, the dinner is ready'; and Buddha takes his overcoat and alms-bowl and goes with his disciples into the town or village to the residence of his host. After dinner, at which well-to-do hosts offer, except meat dishes, the best which the not-very-luxurious cooks of those days could provide, and at which the host himself and his family serve the guests, when the customary hand-washing is over, the host takes his place with his family at Buddha's side, and Buddha addresses to them a word of spiritual admonition and instruction.

If the day be not filled by an invitation,

Buddha, according to monastic usages, undertakes his circuit of the village or town in quest of alms. He, as well as his disciples, rises early, when the light of dawn appears in the sky, and spends the early moments in spiritual exercises or in converse with his disciples, and then he proceeds with his companions towards the town. In the days when his reputation stood at its highest point, and his name was named throughout India among the foremost names, one might day by day see that man before whom kings bowed themselves, walking about, alms-bowl in hand, through streets and alleys, from house to house, and without uttering any request, with downcast look, stand silently waiting until a morsel of food was thrown into his bowl.

When he had returned from his begging excursion and had eaten his repast, there followed, as the Indian climate demanded, a time, if not of sleep, at anyrate of peaceful retirement. Resting in a quiet chamber, or, better still, in the cool shades of dense foliage, he passed the sultry close hours of the afternoon in solitary contemplation, until

the evening came on and drew him once more from holy silence to the bustling concourse of friend and foe.

BUDDHA'S DISCIPLES

FROM the exterior aspect of that which we must be satisfied to accept as a picture of this life, our description now turns to the interior. We have yet to acquaint ourselves with the circle of those to whom Buddha's teaching was especially directed, the disciples who endeavoured by following him to find for their souls the path to rest.

To all appearance this circle of disciples was even in the earliest days by no means a free society, bound together by merely internal cords, something like the band of Jesus' disciples. We can scarcely doubt that it was from the beginning much more of a community of ascetics organised according to fixed rules, a formal monastic order with Buddha at its head. The forms and external technic of a religious life of this class had

been already established in India long before the age of Buddha: a monastic order appeared then to the religious consciousness to be the reasonable, natural form, in which alone the life of those who are associated in a common struggle for release could find expression. As there was nothing in Buddha's attitude generally which could be regarded by his contemporaries as unusual, he had not to introduce anything fundamentally new; on the contrary, it would have been an innovation if he had undertaken to preach a way of salvation, which did not proceed on a basis of monastic observances.

The standing formula with which Buddha is supposed to have received the first believers into this circle has been preserved to us: 'Come hither, O monk; well preached is the doctrine, walk in purity, to make an end of all suffering.' We know not whether this tradition rests on any authentic memory, but the thought which here finds expression seems quite correct, that the circle of Buddha's disciples was from the very beginning a monastic brotherhood, into which the postulant had to be admitted

by an appointed step, with the utterance of a prescribed formula.

The yellow garment of the monk and tonsure are the visible tokens of separation from the world and worldly life ; the severance of the family bond, the renunciation of all property, rigorous chastity, are the self-evident obligations of the 'ascetics who adhere to the son of the Sakya house,' Samanâ Sakyaputtiyâ, the oldest term with which the people designated the members of the young Church.

We know not how far the forms of that corporate life, of which we shall give a fuller description later on, severally extend back to Buddha's own time, of which we are now speaking. It is possible, those half-monthly confessional gatherings, to which so great significance is attached in the simple cult of ancient Buddhism, may have been observed by Buddha himself with the disciples who were with him. The tone which prevailed in the assembly of the believers was calm, composed, one might say, ceremonious. Were we permitted to judge by the impression conveyed to us by the sacred writings, we might opine

that the sense of tranquil goodness and the quiet self-conscious joy, by which the associated life of these monks was pervaded, were not sufficient to compensate the lack of liveliness in expression and interchange of the experiences and emotions of each individual. Occasions of rapture were not unfrequent, and were desired as a high spiritual good : they consisted rather in quiet transport than in ecstatic excitement. Each aspired to them for himself alone ; they knew nothing of that popular enthusiasm which seizes on whole assemblies, where one carries the others away and common emotion excites similar visions in the imagination of hundreds. To boast before the brothers of experiences of ecstasy was strictly forbidden.

The distinction of caste had no place in this band. Whosoever will be Buddha's disciple renounces his caste. In one of the speeches which the sacred writings put in Buddha's mouth, it is said on this subject : ' As the great streams, O disciples, however many they be, the Gangâ, Yamunâ, Aciravatî, Sarabhû, Mahî, when they reach the great ocean, lose

their old name and their old descent, and bear only one name, "the great ocean," so also, my disciples, these four castes, Nobles, Brahmans, Vaiçya, and Çûdra, when they, in accordance with the law and doctrine which the Perfect One has preached, forsake their home and go into homelessness, lose their old name and old paternity, and bear only the one designation, "Ascetics, who follow the son of the Sakya house." And in the discourse 'On the fruit of asceticism,' in which Buddha answers king Ajâtasattu's question regarding the reward of him who leaves his home and devotes himself to the religious life, Buddha speaks of this matter: if a slave or servant of the king puts on the yellow garment, and lives as a monk without reproach in thought, word, and deed, 'wouldest thou, then,' asks Buddha of the king, 'say: well, then, let this man still be my slave and servant, to stand in my presence, bow before me, take upon himself to perform my behests, live to minister to my enjoyments, speak deferentially, hang upon my word?' And the king answers, 'No, sire; I should bow before him, stand before him, invite him

to sit down, give him what he needed in the way of clothing, food, shelter, and of medicine, when he is ill, and I should assure him of protection, watch and ward, as is becoming.'

Thus the religious garb of Buddha's disciples makes lords and commons, Brahmans and Çudras equal. The gospel of deliverance is not confined to the high-born alone, but is given 'to the welfare of many people, to the joy of many people, to the blessing, welfare, and joy of gods and men.'

We can quite understand how historical treatment in our times, which takes a delight in deepening its knowledge of religious movements by bringing into prominence or discovering their social bearings, has attributed to Buddha the rôle of a social reformer, who is conceived to have broken the chains of caste and won for the poor and humble their place in the spiritual kingdom which he founded. But anyone who attempts to describe Buddha's labours must, out of love for truth, resolutely combat the notion that the fame of such an exploit, in whatever way he may depict it to himself, belongs to Buddha.

If anyone speaks of a democratic element in Buddhism, he must bear in mind that the conception of any reformation of national life, every notion in any way based on the foundation of an ideal earthly kingdom, of a religious Utopia, was quite foreign to this fraternity. There was nothing resembling a social upheaval in India. Buddha's spirit was a stranger to that enthusiasm, without which no one can pose as the champion of the oppressed against the oppressor. Let the state and society remain what they are; the religious man, who as a monk has renounced the world, has no part in its cares and occupations. Caste has no value for him, for everything earthly has ceased to affect his interests, but it never occurs to him to exercise his influence for its abolition or for the mitigation of the severity of its rules for those who have lagged behind in worldly surroundings.

While it is true that Buddhism does not reserve to Brahmans only the right of entry into a spiritual life, we must not fall into the error of supposing that Buddha was the first to stand up for this cause and do battle for

it. Before his time, probably long before his time, there were religious orders, which received members of all castes, both males and females. Side by side with the first exclusive religious order of ancient times, the Brahmans, there existed long ere this period, equal to the Brahmans in public estimation, the second religious order of the Samanâ—i.e. ascetics, admission to whose ranks was open to every one who was resolved to renounce a worldly career, whether he was high born or low born. This fact is recognised in the Buddhist traditions as indisputable, as something of which there is no recollection that it had ever been otherwise. There is no need of overrating the value of these traditions, to find in them a guarantee that Buddha did not deem it necessary to undertake a struggle against the leaders of society and thought in behalf of the spiritual rights of the poor and humble: and least of all is it possible that in such a struggle lay the essential character of his life.

This by no means ends all that might be said against the historically untrue conception of Buddha as the victorious champion of the

lower classes against a haughty aristocracy of birth and brain.

If one speaks of the equality of all within the pale of Buddha's confraternity, it is not altogether superfluous to contrast the theory, which was prevalent on this subject among Buddhists, with the actual facts.

It is the case, as we have seen, that the Buddhist theory acknowledged the equal right of all persons without distinction to be received into the order, and it could not but acknowledge it, or it would have given up the consequences of its own principles. And indeed it does not appear to have been likely to occur that postulants should be rejected contrary to the law, on the score of caste. Nevertheless it seems as if the actual composition of the band, which surrounded Buddha's person, and the composition of the early Church especially, was by no means in due keeping with the theory of equality: if even Brahman exclusiveness was not maintained in its full extent, still a marked leaning to aristocracy seems to have lingered in ancient Buddhism as an inheritance from the past. The sacred

writings, in what they openly record as well as in what they imply between the lines, give us sufficient means of drawing a conclusion as to these matters. In the first great address which tradition puts in Buddha's mouth, the sermon at Benares, there occurs an expression, which unwittingly characterises, and withal criticises, as briefly as it did sharply, the state of the early Church. Buddha speaks on that occasion of the highest consummation of religious aspirations, for the sake of which 'the sons of noble families, kulaputtâ, leave their homes and go into homelessness.' The disciples who gathered round the teacher coming from the noble house of the Sakyas, the descendant of king Ikshvâku, were themselves for the most part 'sons of noble families.' If we review the ranks of personages, whom we are accustomed to meet in the texts, we find it clearly indicated, that the real situation was by this phrase described conformably to fact; here are young Brahmans like Sâriputta, Mogallâna, Kaccâna, nobles like Ânanda, Râhula, Anuruddha, sons of the greatest merchants and highest municipal dignitaries, like Yasa,

invariably men and youths of the most respectable classes of society, and with an education in keeping with their social status. Besides there were the numerous ascetics of other sects, converts to the faith of Buddha, who undoubtedly occupied, by birth and breeding, the same social position. I am not aware of any instance in which a Candâla—a Pariah of that age—is mentioned in the sacred writings as a member of the order. For the lower order of the people, for those born to toil in manual labour, hardened by the struggle for existence, the announcement of the connection of misery with all forms of existence was not made, nor was the dialectic of the law of the painful concatenation of causes and effects calculated to satisfy 'the poor in spirit.' 'To the wise belongeth this law,' it is said, 'not to the foolish.' Very unlike the word of that Man, who suffered 'little children to come unto Him, for of such is the kingdom of God.' For children and those who are like children, the arms of Buddha are not opened.

Of the several personages in the narrower

circle of disciples we cannot expect to have a life-like individual portrait. Here, as everywhere else in the literature of ancient India, we always meet merely with types, not individualities. We have already touched on this peculiarity: each of the chief disciples resembles every other, so that one might be taken for the other, the same conglomerate of perfect purity, perfect internal peace, perfect devotion to Buddha. These are not real individuals but the incarnated 'esprit de corps' of the pupils of Buddha.

The names and the more important surroundings in the life of the individual disciples are undoubtedly authentic. Tradition accords the foremost place among them to those two Brahmans, bound to each other from youth up in bonds of closest friendship—viz. Sâriputta and Moggallâna, who meet us among the converts gained by Buddha in the outset of his career. Throughout his and their long life they followed him faithfully, and they died within a short interval of each other in extreme old age, not long before Buddha's death. It is Sâriputta whom Buddha is be-

lieved to have declared to be the most prominent among his followers: he is, it is said, like the eldest son of a world-ruling monarch, who, following the king, helps him to put in motion the wheel of sovereignty, which he sets rolling over the earth. Nearest to these two Brahmans, among those who stand closest to Buddha, is his own cousin, Ânanda, who, when still a youth, adopted the garb of a monk in company with a whole group of young nobles of Sakya family; his brother Devadatta, whom we shall discover to be the apostate and traitor in the band, was likewise among these Sakyas. The care of Buddha's person and the ordinary necessities of his daily life, were committed to Ânanda's hands: often, when Buddha had left all the other disciples behind, it is Ânanda alone who accompanies him, and the narrative of Buddha's last journeyings and of his farewell address gives, as we shall see, to Ânanda a rôle, which may well entitle him to be above all others known as the disciple 'whom the Master loved.' Another member of this select circle was Upâli, who had formerly served the noble Sakyas as a barber, and who entered

Buddha's order at the same time with his masters. He is frequently mentioned in the sacred writings as the first propounder of the ecclesiastical law of the young Church; it is not improbable that he had a special share in the framing and the scholastic transmission of the old confessional liturgy, from which has sprung the whole ecclesiastical literature of Buddhism. Buddha's own son, Râhula, whom he had begotten before leaving his father's roof, also entered the order, and is not unfrequently mentioned with the great disciples already named; a prominent part, however, he does not seem to have played in this band.

The Judas Iscariot among Buddha's disciples—except that his machinations were unsuccessful—is, as narrated, Buddha's own cousin, Devadatta. Stimulated by ambition he seems to have aimed at stepping into the place of Buddha, who had already grown old, and at getting the management of the community into his own hands. When Buddha does not permit this, he attempts, in conjunction with Ajâtasattu, the son of king

Bimbisâra, who is aiming at his father's throne, to put the Master out of the way. Their projects fail: miracles are related, by which the life of the Holy One is preserved: the defeated murderers are attacked by fear and trembling, when they come near Buddha; he speaks gently to them, and they are converted to the faith; the piece of rock which is intended to crush Buddha, is interrupted by two converging mountain peaks, so that it merely grazes Buddha's foot: the wild elephant, which is driven against Buddha in a narrow street, remains standing before him, paralysed by the magic power of his 'friendly thought,' and then turns tamely back. At last Devadatta is said to have attempted to obtain the leadership of the Church in another way. He makes five propositions, of which we possess an account seemingly quite above suspicion. On a number of points which affect monastic life, on which Buddha allowed a certain amount of freedom of action at the discretion of the individual member, Devadatta attempted to substitute a more rigorous ascetic praxis for these liberal regulations: for instance, he in-

sisted that a monk should have his camping-place all his life long in the jungle, while Buddha permitted him to live in the neighbourhood of towns and villages, and was himself accustomed to live there; a monk was, furthermore, to live only on the contributions which he collected on his begging excursions, and was not to accept any invitations to dine with the pious laity; he was to dress himself only in clothes made up of gathered rags; and more of the like. Whoever acted otherwise, would be punished with expulsion from the community. Devadatta proposed these rules as the fundamental principles of a true and rigid spiritual life, in opposition to Buddha's arrangements as a lax concession to human frailties, and he tried to draw off to himself the monks around Buddha: if we may believe tradition, with a transient success, which then turned into total discomfiture. Devadatta is said to have come to a deplorable end.

These are the most prominent figures in the band of Buddha's disciples; but disciples in deed and in truth those alone are who give

up all that is earthly to, as the formula puts it, 'walk in holiness, to put an end to all suffering': monks and nuns. But, as in the history of Jesus, Lazarus and Nicodemus, Mary and Martha, stand side by side with Peter and John, so Buddhism also, side by side with the male and female mendicants, recognises male and female votaries of Buddha and his law, believers who honour Buddha as the holy preacher of deliverance and his word as the word of truth, but who remain in their worldly position, in wedlock, in the possession of their property, and make themselves useful to the Church as far as they can, by gifts and charities of every kind. Yet the monks alone, not the lay-adherents, are exclusively members of the Church.

The formation of this wider circle of worldly believers has been regarded as an inconsistent relaxation of original Buddhism, as a concession on the part of clear and rigorous thought to practicability and the weakness of human nature. It has also been supposed that in the oldest texts the distinction to be found is only between professed

believers—that is, monks, and non-believers—that is, the laity, but not that of believing monks and believing laity. This is wholly erroneous. The oldest traditions which we possess speak of the laity, who profess to be friends and votaries of Buddha and the order, and the nature of the case compels us to attach credit to those traditions. There must, in fact, since ever there were mendicant monks in India, have also been pious laymen, who gave something to these religious beggars, and there must also soon have grown up, whether with or without recognised forms and names, it is quite immaterial, a certain relationship between definite monks or monastic orders and a definite laity, who felt themselves bound to each other, the one class to receive spiritual instruction, the other to obtain the little that they needed for their maintenance. And more than a connection of this class, the relation which subsisted between Buddha's order and the lay-believers has not been.

Princes and nobles, Brahmans and merchants, we find among those who 'took their refuge in Buddha, the Law, and the Order'—

that is, who made their profession as lay-believers; the wealthy and the aristocrat, it seems, here also exceeded the poor; to reach the humble and wretched, the sorrowing, who endured yet another sorrow than the great universal sorrow of impermanence, was not the province of Buddhism.

Prominent among the 'adherents' stand the two royal friends of Buddha, Bimbisâra, the ruler of Magadha, and Pasenadi, the ruler of Kosala, both approximately of the same age as Buddha, and throughout their lives true protectors of his Church. Then comes Jîvaka, the renowned physician-in-ordinary to Bimbisâra, who was appointed by the king to undertake medical attendance, not on him and his women only, but also on Buddha and Buddha's order; next, the merchant Anâthapindika, who had presented to the order the garden of Jetavana, Buddha's favourite place of resort. In all important places which Buddha touched in the course of his wanderings, he found bands of such lay-believers, who went out to meet him, arranged for assemblies, in which Buddha spoke, who gave him and his

companions their meals, who placed their residences and gardens at their disposal, or made them over to the order as Church property. If he went wandering about with hundreds of his disciples, pious votaries were sure to accompany him on his journey with carts and waggons, and they brought necessities of life, salt, and oil with them, for each in his turn to prepare the wanderer a meal, and crowds of needy folk followed in their train to snatch the remains of these provisions.

WOMEN

BUDDHA and his disciples did not and could not fail to come into contact with women : every begging excursion, every repast at the house of a lay-member, at which the female members of the household appeared with the master of the house and listened after the repast to spiritual instruction, necessarily involved such meetings. The seclusion of women from the outer world, which later custom has enjoined, was quite unheard of in ancient India ; women

took their share in the intellectual life of the people, and the most delicate and tenderest of the epic poems of the Indians show us how well they could understand and appreciate true womanhood.

But was it possible for a mind like Buddha, who in the severe determination of renunciation had torn himself away from all that is attractive and lovely in this world, was he given the faculty to understand and to value woman's nature? And were those ideals, which evoked the exertions of Buddha's disciples, calculated in their impersonal transcendentalism, to kindle and satisfy women's hearts, to be even realised in their rigorous and stern consequences by womanly feeling?

Women are to the Buddhist, of all the snares which the tempter has spread for men, the most dangerous; in women are embodied all the powers of infatuation, which bind the mind of the world. The ancient story-books of the Buddhists are full of narratives and illustrations of the incorrigible artifice of women. 'Unfathomably deep, like a fish's course in the water,' the moral of one such

history runs, 'is the character of women, robbers with many artifices, with whom truth is hard to find, to whom a lie is like the truth and the truth like a lie.'—'Master,' Buddha is asked by Ânanda, 'how shall we behave before women?'—'You should shun their gaze, Ânanda.'—'But if we see them, master, what then are we to do?'—'Not speak to them, Ânanda.'—'But if we do speak to them, master, what then?'—'Then you must watch over yourselves, Ânanda.'

We are told, and some trustworthy memory may possibly be at the bottom of this tradition, that for a long time only men were permitted to be received into Buddha's order, and that it was only with grave misgiving that Buddha yielded to the pressure of his foster-mother, Mahâpajâpatî, to receive women also as his disciples. 'As in a field of rice, Ânanda, which is in full vigour, the disease breaks out which is called mildew,—then the vigour of that field of rice continues no longer,—so also, Ânanda, if women be admitted in a doctrine and to an order to renounce the world and go into homelessness, holy living

does not last long. — If, Ânanda, in the doctrine and the order, which the Perfect One has founded, it were not conceded to women to go out from their homes into homelessness, holy living would remain preserved, Ânanda, for a long time; the pure doctrine would abide for a thousand years. But now, Ânanda, that, in the doctrine and order, which the Perfect One has founded, women renounce the world and go into homelessness, under these circumstances, Ânanda, holy living will not be long preserved; only five hundred years, Ânanda, will the doctrine of the truth abide.'

The narratives of the sacred writings, accordingly, unmistakably keep the female disciples, who have donned the garb of nuns, at a certain distance from the master, both in spiritual offices and in daily life. Buddhism has not had a Mary of Bethany. Buddha announces the rules, which he lays down for the order of nuns, to the monks, and merely causes them to reach the nuns through them: and these regulations keep the nuns as regards the monks in perfectly submissive sub-

jection: throughout they are treated merely as a tolerated, and reluctantly tolerated, element in the Church. Not one of the female disciples is near the master when he is dying, and it is made a matter of reproach to Ânanda, that he has granted access to Buddha's corpse to women, whose tears bedewed the corpse. 'O Kriton, let someone lead this woman home,' says Socrates, when Xanthippe appears in his prison to take a last farewell of him.

Thus, between the spirit which animated Buddha and Buddha's disciples, and that which woman's nature is and gives and seeks, there was a fundamental difference, which could not be reconciled. But instead we find the women of India all the more zealously engaged as fellow-labourers through charity, assistance, and service, in those practical spheres which the young Church opened up for religious usefulness. The stupendous munificence, which met the Buddhist order at every step, proceeded in great measure, perhaps in the greatest measure, from women.

In the sacred texts the type of a female votary of Buddha, as she ought to be, with her indefatigable zeal as a giver and as a helper, is the honourable matron Visâkhâ. She is a rich citizen commoner at Sâvatthi, the chief town of Kosala, the mother of many blooming children, the grandmother of countless grandchildren. Everyone invites Visâkhâ to sacrificial ceremonies and banquets, and has the dishes offered to her first; a guest like her brings luck to the house. It is Visâkhâ, who is represented to have made the first liberal preparations on a large scale to provide for Buddha's disciples who came to Sâvatthi, the chief necessities of life. I here insert the narrative in point; it gives at once an intelligible picture of what people in the young brotherhood thought as to giving and receiving and as to which of the two is the more blessed: the only benefactor, who must be thanked, is not he who gives anything to Buddha and his order, but Buddha who accepts the gift and thereby puts the giver in the position to practise the virtue of charity and to become

partaker of that reward, which is promised to this virtue.

Buddha is one day dining with his disciples at Visâkhâ's. After dinner Visâkhâ approaches him and says: 'Eight requests, sire, I make of the Exalted One'—'The Perfect, Visâkhâ, are too exalted to be able to grant every wish.'—'What is allowable, sire, and what is unblamable.'—'Then speak, Visâkhâ.'

'I desire as long as I live, sire, to give the brotherhood clothes for the rainy season, to give food to stranger monks who arrive here, to give food to monks who are passing through, to give food to sick brethren, to give food to the attendants on the sick, to give medicine to the sick, to distribute a daily dole of cooked rice, to give bathing dresses to the sisterhood of nuns.'

'What object hast thou in view, Visâkhâ, that thou approachest the Perfect One with these eight wishes?'

'A monk, O sire, who comes from foreign parts, does not know the streets and lanes and he goes about weary to collect alms.

When he has partaken of the food which I shall provide for the monks who arrive, he may then, when he has inquired the ways and the streets, go out refreshed to collect alms. This end, O sire, I have in view: therefore I desire as long as I live to give food to monks when they arrive.—And again, sire, a monk who is travelling through, will, if he has to seek for food for himself, fall behind his caravan, or will arrive late when he intends to rest, and he will walk on his journey wearily. If he has partaken of the food which I shall have provided for monks who are passing through, he will not fall behind his caravan, and he will arrive in proper time at the place where he intends to rest, and he will walk on his journey refreshed. This object I have in view, sire; therefore I desire, as long as I live, to give food to the monks who are passing through.—It has happened, sire, that nuns were bathing naked together in the river Aciravatī, at the same bathing-place with prostitutes. The prostitutes, sire, mocked the nuns, saying: “Most respected ones, what do you need of your

holy life, as long as you are young? Is it not proper to gratify desire? When you are old you may begin a holy life, so both will be yours, this life and that which is to come." When the nuns, sire, were thus mocked by the prostitutes, they were put out of temper. Improper, sire, is nakedness for a woman, obscene and objectionable. This, sire, I consider; therefore I desire, as long as I live, to provide bathing-dresses for the sisterhood of nuns.'

And Buddha says: 'Good, Visâkhâ! thou doest well, that thou, seeking this reward, askest the Perfect One for these eight wishes. I grant thee these eight wishes, Visâkhâ.'

Then the Holy One praised Visâkhâ, the mother of Migâra, in these words:

'Who gives food and drink with generous readiness,

The follower of the Holy One, rich in virtues,
Who, without grudging, gives gifts for the
reward of heaven,

Who puts an end to pain, is ever intent on
bringing joy,

Obtains the reward of a heavenly life.

She walks the shining, commendable path,
Free from pain, she joyfully reaps for a very
long period

The reward of good deeds in the happy realm
of heaven above.'

Pictures like this of Visâkhâ, benefactresses of the Church, with their inexhaustible religious zeal, and their not less inexhaustible resources of money, are certainly, if anything ever was, drawn from the life of India in those days: they cannot be left out of sight, if we desire to get an idea of the actors who made the oldest Buddhist community what it was.

BUDDHA'S OPPONENTS

Now that we have made the acquaintance of disciples and friends, our next inquiry is about the enemies and about the battles in which the new gospel had to prove its strength. If we might believe the Buddhist texts on this subject, Buddha's career was nothing but one great uninterrupted victorious march. Wherever he comes, the masses, it

is told us time after time, flock to him. The other teachers are deserted; they are silent if he 'raises his lion voice in the assemblies.' Whoever hears his discourse, is converted.

This picture certainly does not wholly correspond with the truth, and we can, on some points at least, learn the actual facts tolerably well.

Above all it must be borne in mind that Buddha did not find himself like other reformers face to face with a great united power, capable of resistance, and determined to resist, in which was embodied the old which he attacked and desired to replace by the new.

People are accustomed to speak of Buddhism as opposed to Brahmanism, somewhat in the way that it is allowable to speak of Lutheranism as an opponent of the papacy. But if they mean, as they might be inclined from this parallel to do, to picture to themselves a kind of Brahmanical Church, which is assailed by Buddha, which opposed its resistance to its operations like the resistance of the party in possession to an upstart, they

are mistaken. Buddha did not find himself in the presence of a Brahmanical hierarchy, embracing the whole people, overshadowing the whole popular life. In the eastern districts religious movement, allowing itself free play, had ramified in many separate directions: sects upon sects exist side by side, at peace or at war as circumstances determined. The champions of the Veda, of Brahmanism, are really not more than one among many parties, and, indeed, to all appearance, by no means an especially powerful one. They wanted altogether compact organisation; least of all did they, at anyrate in the territories in which Buddha's work was prosecuted, represent a state-Church, or had they power to enforce their commands by the assistance of worldly power. Their personal prestige was by no means undisputed there. From the great Brahman, who as an officer of high rank oppressed the people in the king's name and then deceived the king in turn, down to the small clerics, who, if invited to dine, made themselves disagreeably conspicuous by their behaviour at table; their personal appearance

and manner of life provoked criticism, and men did not withhold that criticism. Long since a Samana, an ascetic, had come to be not a hair lighter in popular estimation than a Brahman. The Veda, the great patent of nobility of the Brahman class could not possibly give them a claim to power and popularity, such even as that the Pharisees had in the Mosaic law. Who among the people cared for the Veda, for the abstruse theories of sacrifice, the language of which no one understood, or for the ancient hymns, the language of which was still less understood, the hymns to forgotten deities, the heirlooms of grammarians and antiquaries? The propitiatory sacrifice with its plain external conception of guilt and purification, behind which the greedy exaction of a priestcraft lay concealed, must have kept alive in earnest and clear-thinking natures, ill-will towards this priesthood.

Thus Brahmanism was not to Buddha an enemy whose conquest he would have been unable to effect. He may often have found the local influence of respected Brahmans an

obstacle in his path, but against this a hundred other Brahmans stood by him as his disciples or had declared for him as lay members. Here no struggle on a large scale has taken place. The Brahmans had not the weapons of the world without at their disposal in such a warfare, and where the arbitrament was of intellectual weapons, they were sure to lose.

Buddha discredited the sacrificial system; he censured with bitter irony the knowledge of Vedic scribes as sheer folly, if not as shameless swindle; Brahmanical pride of caste was not more gently handled. He who repeats the lays and sayings of the poetic sages of antiquity and then fancies himself a sage, is like a plebeian or a slave, who should mount up to the place from which a king has addressed his retinue, and speak the same words and then fancy himself also a king. The pupil believes what the teacher has believed, the teacher what he has received from the teachers before him. 'Like a chain of blind men, I take it, is the discourse of the Brahmans: he who is in the front sees nothing, he who is in the middle sees nothing, he who is behind

sees nothing, what then ? Is not, if this be so, the faith of the Brahmans vain ?'

The classical expression of the views of the old Buddhist Church, and, we may say, of Buddha, regarding the value of the Vedic sacrificial cult, is contained in a conversation of Buddha with a Brahman of position, who had asked Buddha about the essentials of a proper sacrifice.

Buddha then narrates the story of a powerful and successful king of bygone days, who, after splendid victories and the conquest of the whole earth, formed the resolution of making a great offering to the gods. He summoned his family priest and asked his instructions, as to how he should set about his project. The priest admonishes him before offering a sacrifice, to establish first of all peace, prosperity, and security in his kingdom. Not until all injustices in the land are repaired, does he proceed to sacrifice. And at his sacrifice no life of sentient creature is taken ; no cattle and sheep are killed ; no trees are hewn down ; no grass is cut. The servants of the king perform their work in connection with

the sacrifice, not under pressure and in tears, in fear of the overseer's verge; each works willingly, as his own inclination prompts him. Libations of milk, oil, and honey are offered, and thus the king's sacrifice is performed. But there is, Buddha goes on to say, yet another offering, easier to perform than that, and yet higher and more blessed: where men make gifts to pious monks, where men build dwelling-places for Buddha and his order. And there is yet a higher offering: where a man with believing heart takes his refuge with Buddha, with the Doctrine, with the Order, when a man robs no being of its life, when a man puts far from him lying and deceit. And there is yet a higher offering: where a man separates as a monk from joy and sorrow and sinks himself in holy repose. But the highest offering, which a man can bring, and the highest blessing of which he can be made participator, is, when he obtains deliverance and gains this knowledge: I shall not again return to this world. This is the highest perfection of all offering.

Thus speaks Buddha; the Brahman hears his discourse believingly, and says: 'I take

my refuge with Buddha, with the Doctrine and with the Order.' He had himself intended to perform a great sacrifice, and had hundreds of animals ready for it. 'I let them loose and set them free,' he says, 'let them enjoy green grass, let them drink cool water, let the cool wind fan them.'

The expressions which we here find need no commentary to clearly elicit from them the attitude of the Buddhists towards the ancient cult. We do not hear how the Brahmans on their part fortified their position, what procedure they adopted against the new faith; but, if we possessed Brahmanical sketches of Buddha's appearance, our conviction would hardly be thereby destroyed, that from the very beginning the intrinsic superiority as well as the external advantage in this struggle was on the side of Buddha's disciples.

Buddha found in the rival ascetic leaders and their monastic orders more subtle and dangerous opponents than in the champions of the ancient faith. The spirit which animated many of these communities was allied to the spirit on which Buddha's own work

was based. If we read the sacred books of the Jainas, it seems as if we heard Buddhists speaking.

We have no quite reliable opinion as to the terms upon which the monks of the rival communities mixed with each other. Openly expressed enmity appears to have not always prevailed; it was not unusual for members to visit each other in their hermitages, to exchange civilities, to speak to each other coolly and temperately on dogmatic subjects. That there was notwithstanding an incessant play of intrigue in progress will be obvious; where the object in view was to deprive each other of the protection of influential personages no trouble was spared. King Asoka found occasion in his edicts to point out to the spiritual brotherhoods, that he is only doing an injury to his own faith who thinks to set it in a clear light by abusing the adherents of another faith. But whether Buddha himself and the disciples immediately round him descended from the heights of holy meekness, on which the orthodox tradition enthrones them, to this religious scramble, is

a point on which we are forbidden to hazard a conjecture.

What more than anything else distinguished Buddha from the most of his rivals was his dissentient attitude towards the self-mortifications, in which they saw the path to deliverance. We saw how, according to tradition, Buddha himself in the period of search through which he passed when a young man, had endured self-mortifications in their most rigorous severity, and had found out their fruitlessness in his own case. What drives earthly thoughts out of the soul is not fasting and bodily agony, but self-culture, above all, the struggle for knowledge; and for this struggle man derives the power only from an external life, which is far removed alike from luxury and from privation, and still more from self-inflicted pain. In the sermon at Benares, in which tradition has undertaken to draw up something like a programme of Buddha's operations, polemic directed against those errors of gloomy ascetics is not absent; the way which leads to deliverance keeps itself as far from all self-mortification as it steers clear on the other side of earthly pleasure;

the one as well as the other is there termed unworthy and vain. The true spiritual life is once compared to a lute, the strings of which must not be too loose nor stretched too tensely, if it is to give a correct sound. The balance of the faculties, the internal harmony, is that which Buddha commands his followers to aim at securing.

So far as moral living can maintain a healthy development on the ground and within the limits to which Indian monasticism is once for all by its nature confined, so far we must claim for Buddha's work the merit of such inherent soundness. He has seen through the enveloping husks which conceal the kernel of the ethical more clearly than his contemporaries, and has bequeathed to the community of his followers this knowledge of the subject, the clear rejection of everything which is foreign thereto. It may be chance that has given his doctrine the victory over the doctrines of his rival contemporaries centuries after the deaths of all; but possibly the more the darkness which covers these centuries for us is dissipated,

this game of chance may the more resemble the operation of a law of necessity.

BUDDHA'S METHOD OF TEACHING

OUR task is now to give some idea of the form of Buddha's teaching;—we reserve the attempt to unfold its purport for the following Part. Buddha's whole work was carried on by oral communication; written he has not. Writing itself was in all probability not unknown in his day, but certainly book-writing was unheard of. Brief written communications, brief written notifications, appear to have been common in India even at that time: books were not written, but learned by rote and taught from memory. Those extensive treatises, such as were addressed by the apostles in the form of letters to the early Christian Churches, and which cast so rich a light on the history of those Churches and circles of thought, are wholly wanting in Buddhist literature.

Buddha spoke, not Sanscrit, but, like every

one around him, the popular idiom of eastern Hindostan. We can by inscriptions and the analogies of a closely allied, probably South Indian popular dialect, the Pâli, obtain an adequate picture of this dialect: a soft and agreeably-sounding language, which is distinguished from the Sanscrit by the same smoothing down of the conjoined consonants, the same tendency to vocalic terminations, which gives the Italian its character as opposed to the Latin language. People said *mutte* for *muktas*, 'free,' *vijju* for *vidyut*, 'the lightning,' as the Italian says *fatti* for *facti*, *ama* for *amat*. The syntax was simple and not very well suited to express fine and sharp shades of dialectic.

In the early Church, moreover, no special importance was attached to the dialect in which the doctrine of deliverance had been first preached. Buddha's words are confined to no language. 'I direct, O disciples,' tradition makes him say, 'that each individual learn the words of Buddha in his own tongue.'

Anyone who reads the lectures which the sacred texts put in Buddha's mouth, can

scarcely refrain from asking whether the form, in which he himself taught his doctrine, can possibly have resembled these self-same panoramas of abstract and often abstruse structures with their endless repetitions piled high upon each other. Should we not like to see in the picture of those early times something else beside merely a living spirit operating with the fresh vigour of youth in the circle of master and pupils, and should we not for that reason be inclined to eliminate from this picture all that imparts to it an air of tension and fiction? And at the same time is it natural, when we endeavour to obtain a representation of Buddha's teaching and preaching, for us to resort to another source beside the tradition of the Buddhist Church—that is, when thought, consciously or unconsciously, recurs to the teaching of Jesus? Those homely sentences with their totally unstudied external setting and their deep internal wealth, seem to wear that very form, from which we may infer that it, or some similar form, may have accompanied the dissemination of the Buddhist doctrine, as long as the spirit of the early ages survived.

Reflections such as these are not easy to repress, but historical treatment, before committing itself to them, will do well not to leave untested the ground and foundation on which they rest.

It cannot be forgotten that the fundamental differences of the thoughts and the dispositions with which the early Christian and early Buddhist communities dealt, were such that these differences must also find expression in the method of religious instruction.

Where the pure sentiment of the simple believing heart is supreme, where there are children to whom the Father in heaven has given His kingdom to possess, there the brief and homely language, which comes from the depth of a pure heart, may touch the proper chords more effectually than the highly organised development of a system of ideas. But the mode of thinking of the world in which Buddha lived, moves in other paths: for it all weal and woe depend on knowledge and ignorance; ignorance is the ultimate root of all evil, and the sole power, which can strike at the root of this evil, is knowledge. Deliver-

ance is, therefore, above all, knowledge ; and the preaching of deliverance can be nothing less or more than the exposition of this knowledge, which means the unfolding of a series of abstract notions and abstract propositions.

If, therefore, we do not wish, out of deference to a universal feeling of probability, which has based its standard on a ground other than Indian, to destroy the singularity and continuity of Indian developments, we must be on our guard against making a fanciful picture of Buddha, as if he were one of those aboriginal natures living only amid the concrete and tangible, to whom the spirit is everything, the letter nothing. His thought drew its nourishment from the long course of metaphysical speculation which preceded him ; he shares the delight in the metaphysical which is inherent in the Indian blood, the taste for abstraction, classification, and construction ; and viewing him from this aspect, we should compare him not so much to the founder of Christianity, as to its theological champions, something such as Origen was. Thus we cannot refuse credence to the tradition which, in

however many forms it makes Buddha speak, yet represents the particular weight of his teaching as lying in great lectures, beside which dialogue and parable, fable and sententious sayings, appear to be something merely adventitious or marginal.

The Vedic literature gives us a picture of the forensic style of dogmatic teaching and debate, which had established itself long before Buddha's time in the Brahmanical schools and on the sacrificial ground. The word which is to convey holy things, needs a fitting garb : the setting of spiritual discourse bears a solemn, sacred character, the stateliness of which soon changes to ponderous gravity. The personal bearing of the speaker also is not a matter of indifference : a strict ceremonial regulates his appearance and his movements. Thus men were wont to think in Brahman circles long before Buddha's time, thus they were wont to think in the Buddhist Church at the time in which our texts were compiled. Are we to suppose that Buddha and the circles around him, standing in the middle between this epoch and that, felt differently from both ? How-

ever widely form, tone, and movement in the didactic lectures, which we find in the sacred texts, may differ from what appears to us the natural and necessary manner of living spoken language, anyone who knows how to apply different standards to things differing in their conditions, will find it not impossible to believe that the solemnly earnest style of address of Buddha was much more nearly allied to the type of the addresses preserved to us by tradition, than to that which our feeling of the natural and the probable might be tempted to substitute for it.

The periods of these addresses in their motionless and rigid uniformity, on which no lights and shadows fall, are an accurate picture of the world as it presented itself to the eye of that monastic fraternity, the grim world of origination and decease, which goes on like clockwork in an ever uniform course, and behind which rests the still deep of the Nirvâna. In the words of this ministry, there is heard no sound of working within, no voice of yearning, nothing which—passing from person to person with the power which the utterance

of a superior man possesses, and with all the relentlessness which is inseparable from that power—may fasten on the hearers. No impassioned entreating of men to come to the faith, no bitterness for the unbelieving who remain afar off. In these addresses, one word, one sentence, lies beside another in stony stillness, whether it expresses the most trivial thing or the most important. As worlds of gods and worlds of men are, for the Buddhist consciousness, ruled by everlasting necessity, so also are the worlds of ideas and of verities: for these, too, there is one, and only one, necessary form of knowledge and expression, and the thinker does not make this form but he adopts what is ready to hand—as Buddha speaks, so countless Buddhas in countless ages of the world have spoken and will speak. Therefore, everything which resembles a free or arbitrary dealing of the mind with the material, must be absent from the diction of this ministration of salvation; every idea, every thought, has the same right to be heard in full and uncurtailed at the place which belongs to it, and thus those endless re-

petitions accumulate which Buddha's disciples were never tired of listening to anew, and always honouring afresh as the necessary garb of holy thought, as something which should be so and not otherwise. One might often fancy that at Buddha's time the human mind had not yet discovered the magic word which joins together the lengths of disconnected co-ordinates into one compact whole, the insignificant but powerful word 'and.' Hear how one of the most renowned discourses expresses the thought that all man's senses and the world, which they apprehend, are attacked and wasted by the sorrow-bringing powers of the earthly and the impermanent as by a flaming fire.

Then said the Exalted One to the disciples :
 ' Everything, O disciples, is in flames. And what Everything, O disciples, is in flames ? The eye, O disciples, is in flames, the visible is in flames, the knowledge of the visible is in flames, the contact with the visible is in flames, the feeling which arises from contact with the visible, be it pleasure, be it pain, be it neither pleasure nor pain, this also is in

flames. By what fire is it kindled? By the fire of desire, by the fire of hate, by the fire of fascination, it is kindled; by birth, old age, death, pain, lamentation, sorrow, grief, despair, it is kindled: thus I say. The ear is in flames, the audible is in flames, the knowledge of the audible is in flames, the contact with the audible is in flames, the feeling which arises from contact with the audible, be it pleasure, be it pain, be it neither pleasure nor pain, this also is in flames. By what fire is it kindled? By the fire of desire, by the fire of hate, by the fire of fascination, it is kindled; by birth, old age, death, pain, lamentation, sorrow, grief, despair, it is kindled: thus I say. The sense of smell is in flames,

—and then follows for the third time the same series of propositions;—the tongue is in flames; the body is in flames; the mind is in flames;—each time the same detail follows unabridged. Then the address goes on:

‘Knowing this, O disciples, a wise, noble hearer of the word becomes wearied of the eye, he becomes wearied of the visible, he becomes wearied of the knowledge of the

visible, he becomes wearied of contact with the visible, he becomes wearied of the feeling which arises from contact with the visible, be it pleasure, be it pain, be it neither pleasure nor pain. He becomes wearied of the ear, —and then follows one after the other the whole series of ideas as above. The address concludes :

‘While he becomes wearied thereof, he becomes free from desire ; free from desire he becomes delivered ; in the delivered arises the knowledge : I am delivered ; re-birth is at an end, perfected is holiness, duty done ; there is no more returning to this world ; he knows this.’

The address on the flames of the conflagration of the senses purports to have been delivered by Buddha to the thousand hermits of Uruvelâ, when they had already confessed the faith and received initiation, when in them, as the texts are wont to express it, ‘the pure and moteless eye of the truth was awakened : whatever is subject to the law of origination, every such thing is also subject to the law of decease.’ But if the object be to bring the

doctrine of suffering and of deliverance near to a novice, who is still far from the revelation of Buddha, the variations of the sacred writings assume a somewhat different form. As a specimen of their type, place may here be given to the narrative of the village fathers of the eighty thousand villages of the Magadha kingdom, who were assembled round the king of Magadha, and at the end of their deliberations were sent by him to Buddha.

But when the king of Magadha, Seniya Bimbisâra, had instructed the eighty thousand village elders in the laws of the visible world, he dismissed them and said : ' Friends, ye have now been instructed by me in the rules of the visible universe ; go now and approach him, the Exalted One ; he, the Exalted One, will instruct you in the things of the hereafter.' Then the eighty thousand village elders went to the mountain Gijjhakûta. At that time the venerable Sâgata was on duty with the Exalted One. The eighty thousand village elders went on to where the venerable Sâgata was ; when they had come up to him, they said to the venerable Sâgata : ' Here come

eighty thousand village elders, sire, to see the Exalted One. Come, sire, vouchsafe to us to see the Exalted One.' 'Tarry here a while, my friends, that I may announce you to the Exalted One.' Then vanished the venerable Sâgata from the steps at the entrance to the monastery, in the presence of the eighty thousand village elders, and before their eyes rose up in the presence of the Exalted One and spoke to the Exalted One: 'The eighty thousand village elders are come hither, sire, to see the Exalted One. Sire, let the Exalted One be pleased to do what he now thinks right for the occasion.' 'Then place a seat for me, Sâgata, in the shadow of the monastery.' 'Yes, sire,' replied the venerable Sâgata to the Exalted One, took a stool, vanished before the face of the Exalted One, came up again before the face of the eighty thousand village elders and before their eyes on the steps, and prepared a seat in the shadow of the monastery. Then the Exalted One went out of the monastery and took a seat on the stool which had been set for him in the shadow of the monastery. Then the eighty thousand village elders ap-

proached to where the Exalted One was ; when they had come up to him they bowed themselves before the Exalted One and sat down near him. But the eighty thousand village elders directed their thoughts to the venerable Sâgata alone, and therefore not to the Exalted One. Then the Exalted One knew in his mind the thoughts of the eighty thousand village elders, and said to the venerable Sâgata : 'Come, Sâgata, show yet greater marvels of superhuman ability.' 'Yes, sire,' the venerable Sâgata answered the Exalted One, rose up into the air, and walked on high in the atmosphere, stood, descended, sat down, emitted smoke and flames, and vanished. When the venerable Sâgata had exhibited in various ways, on high in the atmosphere, such marvels of superhuman power, he bowed his head at the feet of the Exalted One, and said to the Exalted One : 'My master, sire, is the Exalted One ; I am his disciple ; my master, sire, is the Exalted One ; I am his disciple.' Thereupon thought the eighty thousand village elders : 'truly this is glorious, truly it is wonderful : if the disciple is so exceedingly mighty and

exceedingly powerful, what will the Master be !' and they directed their thoughts to the Exalted One alone and not to the venerable Sâgata. Then the Exalted One knew in his mind the thoughts of the eighty thousand village elders, and preached to them the word according to the law, as it is : the discourse on giving, the discourse on uprightness, the discourse on the heavens, the corruption, vanity, impurity of desires, the glory of being free from desire. When now the Exalted One perceived that their thoughts were prepared, susceptible, free from obstructions, elevated, and directed towards him, he preached to them what is pre-eminently the teaching of the Buddhas, suffering, the origin of suffering, the removal of suffering, the way to the removal of suffering. As a clean garment, from which all impurity is removed, wholly absorbs within itself the dye, so opened in these eighty thousand village elders, as they sat there, the pure moteless eye of the truth : whatever is subject to the law of origination, all such is subject to the law of decease. And discerning the doctrine, having pierced through to

the doctrine, knowing the doctrine, sinking themselves in the doctrine, overcoming doubt, free from vacillation, having penetrated to knowledge, needing nothing else in their faith in the Master's doctrine, they spoke to the Exalted One thus: 'Excellent, sire, excellent, sire; as a man, O sire, straightens that which is bowed down, or uncovers the hidden, or shows the way to one who has gone astray, or shows a light in the darkness, so that he who has eyes may be able to see the forms of things, even so has the Exalted One proclaimed the doctrine in manifold discourses. We, O sire, take our refuge with the Exalted One, and with the Doctrine and with the Order of his disciples: may the Exalted One receive us as his lay disciples, for from this day henceforth we have taken our refuge with him as long as our life endures.'

This narrative of the visit of the elders to Buddha may be taken as a typical one, the features of which reappear in the sacred texts on all similar occasions. Buddha does not speak at starting of the things which constitute the scope and kernel of his teaching,

but he begins by admonishing to the practice of virtues in worldly vocations, to generosity, to rectitude in every earthly occupation: he speaks of the heavens with their rewards which await him who has led a life of earnest purpose here below. And as soon as he knows that his hearers are fitted to receive something deeper, he proceeds to speak to them of that which, as the texts say, 'is pre-eminently the revelation of the Buddhas,' the doctrines of suffering and deliverance. These are always the same subjects of Buddha's preaching, and we over and over again meet the same expressions of joy and gratitude on the part of the converted, then finally the formula with which they take their refuge as lay brothers or lay sisters in the ancient trinity of the Buddhist Church, the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order. Here and there there is inserted a story of some wonder which rises in no way above the level of quaint and tedious miracle. All these narratives are absolutely wanting in individuality; we seek in vain to gather something therefrom as to how Buddha penetrated and operated on the private per-

sonal life of the individual among his disciples. Whenever we open our gospels, we find portrayed the most delicate and deepest traces of the work of Jesus, which, providing, consoling, healing, and building up, passes from man to man: very different from the picture which the Buddhist Church has preserved to us of its master's work; the living human, the personal hides itself behind the system, the formula; no one to seek out and to console the suffering and the sorrowing; it is only the sorrow of the whole universe of which we again and again hear.

Here and there the outward garb of such narratives is somewhat altered; instead of a sermon we find a dialogue; Buddha questions or is questioned. In the task of producing a life-like picture of such conversations as took place in Buddha's time, or in their own circles, the compilers of our sacred texts, who had not many things to go upon, but had nothing less than a dramatic vein, have certainly in their mode of treatment failed most signally. Those who converse with Buddha are good for nothing else but simply to say 'yes,' and

to be eventually converted, if they have not yet been converted. But anyone who does not suffer himself to be deterred by this want of living concrete reality from following up the logical train of these conversations, will here find more than one trace, though dim and unskilful, of the same maieutic method of dialectic, which history has properly denominated Socratic, after the name of the man who has practised it incomparably more perfectly, among a more brilliantly-gifted people—the same sifting of spiritual truths by argument from analogies which daily life supplies, the same rudiments of the inductive method.

Thus is related to us the conversation of Buddha with Sona, a young man, who had imposed on himself an excess of ascetic observances, and now, when he becomes aware of the fruitlessness of his practice, is on the point of turning to the opposite extreme, and reverting to a life of enjoyment. Buddha says to this disciple: 'How is it, Sona, were you able to play the lute before you left home?'—'Yes, sire.'—'What do you think then, Sona, if the strings of your lute are too tightly strung,

will the lute give out the proper tone and be fit to play ?'—'It will not, sire.'—'And what do you think, Sona, if the strings of your lute be strung too slack ; will the lute then give out the proper tone and be fit to play ?'—'It will not, sire.'—'But how, Sona, if the strings of your lute be not strung too tight or too slack, if they have the proper degree of tension, will the lute then give out the proper sound and be fit to play ?'—'Yes, sire.'—'In the same way, Sona, energy too much strained tends to excessive zeal, and energy too much relaxed tends to apathy. Therefore, Sona, cultivate in yourself the mean of energy, and press on to the mean in your mental powers, and place this before you as your aim.'

Another conversation, carried on between Buddha and a Brahman, deals with the relation between the four castes and the claim to service and obedience which the Brahmans advance against all other castes, and each higher among other castes advances against the lower castes. Buddha couches his criticism in the form of a dialogue, with question and answer. 'If anyone were to ask a Kshatriya

as follows:—"To whom wouldst thou render service: to him with whom, if thou doest him service, thou wilt fare worse for thy service, not better; or to him with whom, if thou doest him service, thou wilt fare better for thy service, not worse?" The Kshatriya would, if he answers properly, answer thus: "Him with whom, if I did him service, I should fare worse for my service, not better, him would I not serve; but him with whom, if I did him service, I should fare better for my service, not worse, to him would I render service." And then the induction goes on in its stiff consecutive course: 'If anyone were to ask a Brahman as follows—if anyone were to ask a Vaiçya as follows—if anyone were to ask a Çûdra as follows.' The answer is naturally every time the same, and the exposition eventually yields this result: 'Where by the service which anyone renders to another, his faith increases, his virtue increases, his understanding increases, his knowledge increases, there, I say, it is that he should render him service.'

Here and there, as in our gospels, parables

alternate with doctrine and admonition: 'I shall show you a parable,' Buddha says, 'by a parable many a wise man perceives the meaning of what is being said.' The operations of man as well as the life of nature are the fields of observation, with which these similes for spiritual life and effort, for deliverance, and the company of the delivered, deal. Buddha's preaching of deliverance is compared to the work of the physician, who draws the poisoned arrow from a wound, and overcomes the power of the poison with remedial herbs. The company of disciples, the gathering of noble spirits, in whom all worldly differences of high and low cease, resembles the sea with its wonders, in the depths of which lie pearls and crystals, in which gigantic creatures have free play, into which the rivers flow, and lose their names, and make up the ocean, so many of them there are. As the lotus flower raises its head out of the water, unaffected by the water, so the Buddhas born in the world, rise above the world, unaffected by the impurity of the world. As the peasant ploughs his fields and sows the seed and irrigates, but has not the power to

say : the grain shall swell to-day, to-morrow it shall germinate, next day it shall ripen, but must wait till the proper time comes and brings growth and ripeness of his corn, so also it is with the disciple who seeks deliverance : he must regulate his course according to strict discipline, practise religious meditation, study diligently the doctrine of salvation, but he has not the power to say : to-day or to-morrow shall my spirit be delivered from every impure habit, but he must wait until his time comes for deliverance to be vouchsafed to him. For the tempter who tries to shut up against man the path of salvation and to lure him to false paths, and the deliverer, who leads him back to the right path, this simile is employed : ' As when, O disciples, in the forest, on a mountain slope, there lies a great tract of low land and water, where a great herd of deer lives, and there comes a man, who devises hurt, distress, and danger for the deer ; who covers over and shuts up the path which is safe, good, and pleasant to take, and opens up a false path, a swampy path, a marshy track. Thenceforward, O disciples, the great herd of deer incurs

hurt and danger and diminishes. But now, O disciples, if a man comes, who devises prosperity, welfare, and safety for this great herd of deer: who clears and opens up the path which is safe, good, and pleasant to take, and does away with the false path, and abolishes the swampy path, the marshy track. Thenceforth, O disciples, will the great herd of deer thrive, grow, and increase. I have spoken to you, O disciples, in a parable, to make known my meaning. But the meaning is this. The great low land and the water, O disciples, are pleasures. The great herds of deer, O disciples, are living men. The man, O disciples, who devises hurt, distress, and ruin, is Mâra, the Evil One. The false path, O disciples, is the eightfold false path, to wit: false faith, false resolve, false speech, false action, false living, false effort, false thought, false self-concentration. The swampy way, O disciples, is pleasure and desire. The swampy track is ignorance. The man, O disciples, who devises prosperity, welfare, salvation, is the Perfect One, the holy, supreme Buddha. The safe, good way, O disciples, in which it is well to

walk, is the holy eightfold path, to wit : right faith, right resolve, right speech, right action, right living, right effort, right thought, right self-concentration. Thus, O disciples, has the safe, good path, in which it is well to walk, been opened up by me ; the false path has been done away, the swampy path, the swampy track has been abolished. Everything, O disciples, that a master, who seeks the salvation of his disciples, who pities them, must do out of pity for them, that have I done for you.'

Such similes run through the discourse on sorrow and deliverance. Through the measured formality of the monastic church-diction, we constantly feel the breath of intelligent sympathy with life and nature, that genuine human desire to observe this motley world, and see whether it cannot by its figurative language throw some light on the spirit world and its secrets.

From similes to fable and romance is not a long way ; the Buddhist mendicant monks were sufficiently Indian to have an abundant share of the old Indian delight in romance. Sometimes the sacred writings make Buddha

tell his disciples a fable of animals, sometimes a history of strange occurrences, and all kinds of human actions, thoughtful or amusing: 'There were once two wise brothers,' or 'there was once at Benares a king, called Brahmadatta,' the history of the banished king Long-grief, and his sagacious son Long-life, or the fable, how the partridge, the ape, and the elephant have learned to live together in virtue and harmony; at the end of every history came, as is fitting, a moral.

But the most beautiful embellishments of Buddha's preaching are those poetical sentences in which all the most delicate powers of light and warmth, which dwell within the Buddhist mind, are concentrated as it were in a focus. Here we need not by any means see merely a poetic embellishment which the Church has attributed to its master's teaching; sentences of this kind, short improvisations, to which the pliant nature of the Çloka-metre readily adapted itself, may very well have been actually a feature of Buddha's mode of speech, and of those specially-gifted among his disciples. These apothegms are so unlike

the dry numbness of the prose lectures, that we may be tempted to ask whether they were really the same spirits which have composed the one and the other. We feel how that prose confined and bound up those who spoke in it; but when the domain of prose ceases, where men are expressing not dry, subtle systems of ideas, but the simple emotions, the sorrows and hopes of their own hearts, life is roused and the blood of life, poetry. Thoughtful feeling, clad in the grand and rich attire of Indian metaphor, looks out upon us, and the Qlokas with their gently measured rhythms, so peculiarly combining uniformity and diversity, flow up and down like the surging billows of the sea, on which the clear sky is reflected amid variegated fragrant lotus flowers. The soul of this poesy, too, is nothing else but what the soul of the Buddhist faith itself is, the one thought, which rings out in sublime monotony from all these apothegms: Unhappy, impermanence, happy he who has the eternal. From this thought there pervades the proverbial wisdom of the Buddhist, that tone of deep, happy repose,

of which that proud sentence says that the gods themselves envy it, that repose which looks down upon the struggling world, stoops to the most distressed and quietly extends to him the picture of absolute peace. For the elucidation of Buddhism nothing better could happen than that, at the very outset of Buddhist studies, there should be presented to the student by an auspicious hand the Dhammapada, that most beautiful and richest of collections of proverbs, to which anyone who is determined to come to know Buddhism must over and over again return, and to which we shall often have to allude in our sketch of the Buddhist teaching.

Buddha is said to have reached the age of eighty years; forty-four years of this term belong to his public career, to what his followers term his Buddhahood. The year of his death is one of the most firmly fixed dates in ancient Indian history; calculations, by which the sum of possible error is confined within tolerably narrow limits, give as a result, that he died not long before or not long after 480 B.C.

Regarding the last months of his life and

his last great journey from Râjagaha to Kusinârâ, the place of his death, we possess a detailed account in a Sûtra of the sacred Pâli Canon. The external features of this narrative bear for the most part, though perhaps not in every particular, the stamp of trustworthy tradition; in the utterances and addresses of Buddha, most of which convey a clear or covert intimation of his approaching end, fancy has undoubtedly allowed itself freer range. A portion at anyrate of the narrative may here be reproduced, partly in 'resumé,' and partly in a verbal translation.

From Râjagaha, the chief town in the Magadha territory, Buddha goes northward. He crosses the Ganges at the place where the new capital, Pâtaliputta, is then being built, the chief city of India in the following centuries. Buddha foretells the coming greatness of this town. Then he journeys on to the opulent and brilliant free-town Vesâlî. Near Vesâlî, in the village of Beluva, he dismissed the disciples who were with him, to pass in solitary retirement the three months at the damp period of the year, the last

rainy season of his life. At Beluva, he was attacked by a severe illness; violent pains seized him, he was near dying. He then bethought him of his disciples. 'It becomes me not to enter into Nirvâna, without having addressed those who cared for me, without speaking to the community of my followers. I shall conquer this illness by my power, and hold life fast within me.' Then the Exalted One subdued the sickness by his power and held the life fast within him. And the illness of the Exalted One vanished. And the Exalted One recovered from his sickness and soon after, when he had recovered from his sickness, he went out of the house and sat down in the shade of the house, on the seat which was prepared for him. Thereupon the venerable Ânanda went to the Exalted One: when he was near him and had made his salutations to the Exalted One, he sat down beside him; sitting by his side, the worthy Ânanda spake to the Exalted One thus: 'Sire, I see that the Exalted One is well; I see, sire, that the Exalted One is better. All nerve had left me, sire;

I was faint; my senses failed me because of the sickness of the Exalted One. But still I had one consolation, sire: the Exalted One will not enter Nirvâna, until he has declared his purpose concerning the body of his followers.' 'What need hath the body of my followers of me now, Ânanda? I have declared the Doctrine, Ânanda, and I have made no distinction between within and without; the Perfect One has not, Ânanda, been a forgetful teacher of the Doctrine. He, Ânanda, who says: I will rule over the Church, or let the Church be subject to me, he, O Ânanda, might declare his will in the Church. The Perfect One, however, O Ânanda, does not say: I will rule over the Church, or let the Church be subject to me. What shall the Perfect One declare, Ânanda, to be his purpose regarding the Church? I am now frail, Ânanda, I am aged, I am an old man, who has finished his pilgrimage and reached old age; eighty years old am I . . . Be ye to yourselves, Ânanda, your own light, your own refuge; seek no other refuge. Let the truth be your light and your

refuge, seek no other refuge. . . . whosoever now, Ânanda, or after my departure shall be his own light, his own refuge, and shall seek no other refuge, whosoever taketh the truth as his light and his refuge and shall seek no other refuge, such will henceforth, Ânanda, be my true disciples, who walk in the right path.'

Buddha now goes on to Vesâlî and makes his usual begging excursion through the town. Here Mâra comes to him and calls on him to enter at once into Nirvâna. Buddha repels him, saying, 'give thyself no trouble on that score, thou evil one. After a short time the Nirvâna of the Perfect One will be accomplished ; three months hence will the Perfect One enter Nirvâna,' And Buddha dismisses the volition which attached life to himself: earthquakes and thunderings accompany his resolution to enter into Nirvâna.

In the evening Buddha sends for all the monks, who are tarrying in the neighbourhood of Vesâlî, and he seats himself in the midst of them and he addresses them :

'Learn ye then fully, O my disciples, that

knowledge which I have attained and have declared unto you, and walk ye in it, practise and increase, in order that this path of holiness may last and long endure, for the blessing of many people, for the joy of many people, to the relief of the world, to the welfare, the blessing, the joy of gods and men. And what, O disciples, is the knowledge which I have attained and have declared unto you, which you are to learn fully, walk in it, practise and increase, in order that this path of holiness may last and long endure, for the blessing of many people, for the joy of many people, to the relief of the world, to the welfare, the blessing, the joy of gods and men? It is the fourfold vigilance, the fourfold right effort, the fourfold holy strength, the five organs, the five powers, the seven members of knowledge, the sacred eightfold path. This, O disciples, is the knowledge which I have attained, and have declared unto you,' etc.

And the Exalted One spake further to the monks: 'Hearken, ye monks, I say unto you: all earthly things are transitory; strive

on without ceasing. In a short time the Perfect One will attain Nirvâna; three months hence will the Perfect One enter Nirvâna.'

Thus spake the Exalted One: when the Perfect One had thus said, the Master further spake as follows:—

'My existence is ripening to its close, the end of my life is near.

I go hence, ye remain behind; the place of refuge is ready for me.

Be watchful without intermission, walk evermore in holiness;

Aye resolute and aye prepared keep ye, O disciples, your minds.

He who evermore walks without stumbling, true to the word of truth,

Struggles into freedom from birth and death, presses through to the end of all suffering.'

On the following day Buddha once more makes a begging excursion through Vesâlî, then looks back upon the town for the last time and sets out with a large concourse of disciples for Kusinârâ, which he had chosen

as the place for his entry into Nirvâna. On the way that sickness, which was to terminate his life, attacked him at Pâvâ. Our text, with a 'naïveté' far removed from modern affectation, has, in the course of the narrative of Buddha's last addresses, preserved to us the information that his illness was brought on by eating pork, which Cunda, the son of a goldsmith at Pâvâ, put before him.

Buddha journeys on, sick and weary, to Kusinârâ. A few verses, of which this journey is the subject, have come down to us :

'Travel-worn came Buddha to the river Kakutthâ,

Peaceful, pure, with clear waters,

Down into the water went the Master, weary,

The supreme Perfect One, without equal.

When he had bathed, the Master drank of the river

And went up out of it with the bands of his disciples,

The holy Master, the preacher of the truth,

The sage went on to the mango grove.

Then spake he to Cunda, the monk : Fold me

My robe in four folds, that I may lay me down.

And Cunda did cheerfully as the Master bade him ;

He quickly spread out the robe folded in four folds.

There the Master laid himself down, the weary one,

And Cunda also sat down beside him.'

At last Buddha arrives at Kusinârâ. There lay on the bank of the river Hiranyavatî a grove of sâl trees. 'Go, Ânanda,' says Buddha, 'and prepare a bed for me between two twin trees, with my head to the north. I am tired, Ânanda ; I shall lie down.'

It was not the season for sâl trees to bloom, but these two twin trees were covered with blossoms from crown to foot. Buddha laid himself down under the blooming trees, like a lion taking his rest, and blossoms fell down on him ; a shower of flowers fell from heaven ; and heavenly melodies sounded overhead, in honour of the dying saint.

Then spake the Exalted One to the venerable Ânanda: 'Although this is not the time for

flowers, Ânanda, yet are these two twin trees completely decked with blossoms, and flowers are falling, showering, streaming down on the body of the Perfect One, . . . heavenly melodies are sounding in the air, in honour of the Perfect One. But to the Perfect One belongeth another honour, another glory, another reward, another homage, other reverence. Whosoever, Ânanda, male disciple or female follower, lay-brother, or lay-sister, lives in the truth in matters both great and small, and lives according to the ordinance and also walks in the truth in details, these bring to the Perfect One the highest honour, glory, praise, and credit. Therefore, Ânanda, must ye practise, thinking: Let us live in the truth in matters great and small, and let us live according to the ordinance and walk in the truth also in details.'

But Ânanda went into the house and wept, saying: 'I am not yet free from impurities, I have not yet reached the goal, and my master, who takes pity on me, will soon enter into Nirvâna.' Then Buddha sent one of the disciples to him, saying: 'Go, O disciple, and say

to Ânanda in my name; the Master wishes to speak with thee, friend Ânanda.' Thereupon Ânanda went in to the Master, bowed himself before him, and sat down beside him. But Buddha said to him: 'Not so, Ânanda, weep not, sorrow not. Have I not ere this said to thee, Ânanda, that from all that man loves and from all that man enjoys, from that must man part, must give it up, and tear himself from it. How can it be, Ânanda, that that which is born, grows, is made, which is subject to decay, should not pass away? That cannot be. But thou, Ânanda, hast long honoured the Perfect One, in love and kindness, with cheerfulness, loyally and unwearyingly, in thought, word and deed. Thou hast done well, Ânanda; only strive on, soon wilt thou be free from impurities.'

When night came on, the Mallas, the nobles of Kusinârâ, went out in streams to the sâl grove with their wives and children, to pay their respects for the last time to the dying Master. Subhadda, a monk of another sect, who had desired to speak with Buddha, turned to him as the last of

the converts who have seen the Master in the flesh.

Buddha, shortly before his departure, said to Ânanda: 'It may be, Ânanda, that ye shall say: the Word has lost its master, we have no master more. Ye must not think thus, Ânanda. The law, Ânanda, and the ordinance, which I have taught and preached unto ye, these are your master when I am gone hence.'

And to his disciples he said: 'Hearken, O disciples, I charge ye: everything that cometh into being passeth away: strive without ceasing.' These were his last words.

His spirit then rose from one state of ecstasy to another, up and down through all the stages of rapture, until he passed into Nirvâna. The earth quaked and thunders rolled. At the moment when Buddha entered Nirvâna, Brahma spake these words:

'In the worlds beings all put off corporeity at some time,

Just as at this present time Buddha, the prince of victory, the supreme master of all worlds,

The mighty, Perfect One, hath entered into Nirvâna.'

Towards sunrise the nobles of Kusinârâ have burned Buddha's body before the city gates with all the honours that are shown to the relics of universal monarchs.

THE TENET OF SUFFERING

'At one time,' as we read, 'the Exalted One was staying at Kosambî in the Sinsapâ grove. And the Exalted One took a few Sinsapâ leaves in his hand and said to his disciples: 'what think ye, my disciples, whether are more, these few Sinsapâ leaves, which I have gathered in my hand, or the other leaves yonder in the Sinsapâ grove?'

'The few leaves, sire, which the Exalted One holds in his hand are not many, but many more are those leaves yonder in the Sinsapâ grove.'

'So also, my disciples, is that much more, which I have learned and have not told you, than that which I have told you. And, where-

fore, my disciples, have I not told you that? Because, my disciples, it brings you no profit, it does not conduce to progress in holiness, because it does not lead to the turning from the earthly, to the subjection of all desire, to the cessation of the transitory, to peace, to knowledge, to illumination, to Nirvâna: therefore have I not declared it unto you. And what, O disciples, have I preached unto you? "This is suffering"—thus, O disciples, have I proclaimed unto you. "This is the origin of suffering"—thus have I proclaimed unto you. "This is the cessation of suffering"—thus have I proclaimed unto you. "This is the path to the cessation of suffering"—thus have I proclaimed unto you.'

This passage states briefly and clearly what the doctrine of Buddhism is and what it is not. It does not purport to be a philosophy, which inquires into the ultimate grounds of things, unfolds to thought the breadths and depths of the universe. It addresses itself to man plunged in sorrow, and, while it teaches him to understand his sorrow, it shows him the way to exterminate it, root

and all. This is the only problem with which Buddhist thought is concerned. 'As the vast ocean, O disciples, is impregnated with one taste, the taste of salt, so also, my disciples, this Law and Doctrine is impregnated with but one taste, with the taste of deliverance.'

Yet this deliverance is not an inheritance for the poor in spirit but only for the wise. And therefore the Buddhist doctrine of deliverance is by no means content with merely those simple ethical reflections, which appeal more to the sensation of a pure heart than to the intellectual faculty of a trained mind. The main outlines of the doctrine might be grasped by every one endowed with a lively feeling among the members of the Church; the more detailed dialectical deductions, however, the proficiency in which was by no means regarded as an unnecessary accomplishment, can have been within the grasp of but comparatively few individuals, even among a people so exceptionally highly endowed with a capacity for dealing with abstract thought as the Indians, and among men who devoted their whole life exclusively to these very

thoughts. In the circles of the ancient Church also they were fully conscious of this. 'To men concerned with worldly pursuits, who have their occupation and find their pleasure in worldly pursuits, will this matter be difficult to comprehend, the law of causality, the chain of causes and effects'; thus Buddha is said to have remarked to himself, before he took upon himself to preach his doctrine. And so we find, when we open the sacred writings of the Buddhists, side by side with those simple, beautiful apothegms, such as are contained in the Dhammapada, those most abstruse dogmatic expositions also, those circuitous, much-involved systems of ideas, comprehensive classifications, long lists of categories, which are held together by a causal nexus or some other logical tie. 'If this be, that also is; if this arises, that also arises; if this be not, then that also is not; if this perishes, that also perishes': thus they were accustomed to reason in the period in which the sacred writings originated, and we have already seen that it is probable that Buddha's own mode of thought and speech

moved in these very paths of abstract discussion, of technical, often scholastic expression and, it may be, of a not very dexterous dialectic.

On the whole we shall be authorised to refer to Buddha himself the most essential trains of thought which we find recorded in the sacred texts, and, in many places, it is probably not too much to believe that the very words, in which the ascetic of the Sakya house couched his gospel of deliverance, have come down to us as they fell from his lips. We find that throughout the vast complex of ancient Buddhist literature which has been collected, certain mottoes and formulas, the expression of Buddhist convictions upon some of the weightiest problems of religious thought, are expressed over and over again in a standard form adopted once for all. Why may not these be words which have received their currency from the founder of Buddhism, which had been spoken by him hundreds and thousands of times throughout his long life devoted to teaching?

The meaning which he conveyed by such

words we can often only approximately determine. Here, as in every case where the word has a preponderant importance over the thought, where it does not smoothly fit the thought, but compresses it within its own straight form, the inquirer who desires to reconstruct remote and foreign forms of thought, has not that surest key which consecutive progression, the inherent necessity of the thought, can give him. Those hundredfold repetitions, those permutations and combinations of every kind, in which dogmatic technicalities meet us, but through which a living current of dialectic movement does not flow, hardly render the meaning of those expressions more comprehensible to us. Moreover, we find the same technical term used often in distinctly different meanings, or we find the same thought expressed in different settings, which can be only partially harmonised with each other. The most serious obstacle, however, which stands in the way of our comprehending Buddhist dogmatics is the silence with which everything is passed over which does not lead 'to

the separation from the earthly, to the subjection of all desire, to the cessation of the transitory, to quietude, knowledge, illumination, to Nirvâna.' We remarked that an extensive stock of metaphysical, and especially psychological technicalities, was esteemed anything but superfluous for him who seeks after quietude and illumination; but advance in this direction was made only up to a certain point, and no further. Speculations like those which were proposed can only be thoroughly comprehensible when they present themselves as a complete, self-contained circle. But here we have a fragment of a circle, to complete which, and to find the centre of which, is forbidden, for it would involve an inquiry after things which do not contribute to deliverance and happiness. When we try to resuscitate in our own way and in our own language the thoughts that are embedded in the Buddhist teaching, we can scarcely help forming the impression that it was not a mere idle statement which the sacred texts preserve to us, that the Perfect One knew much more which he thought inadvisable

to say, than what he esteemed it profitable to his disciples to unfold. For that which is declared points for its explanation and completion to something else, which is passed over in silence—for it seemed not to serve for quietude, illumination, the Nirvâna—but of which we can scarcely help believing that it was really present in the minds of Buddha and those disciples, to whom we owe the compilation of the dogmatic texts.

**THE FOUR SACRED TRUTHS. THE FIRST,
AND BUDDHIST PESSIMISM**

ANCIENT tradition, like Nature, provides us with a starting-point, equally commended to us by ancient tradition and by the natural condition of the question itself, from which we must begin our sketch of Buddhist teaching. At the basis of the whole body of Buddhist thought lies, like a permeating and leavening principle, the contemplation of the suffering of every form of life here on earth. The four sacred truths of the Buddhists treat

of suffering, of the origin of suffering, of the removal of suffering, and of the path to the removal of suffering: it is evermore the word and the idea of suffering which gives the keynote to Buddhist thought.

In these four truths we have the oldest authentic expression of this thought. We may describe this as the Buddhist creed. While most of the categories and propositions which we find embedded in Buddhist teaching are treated, not as something peculiar to this faith, but as the obviously common property of all reflecting religious minds, the four sacred truths always appear to us as something which the Buddhists hold beyond all non-Buddhists, as the kernel and the pole of the Doctrine. Many were the steps of knowledge which Buddha had taken on his long and toilsome journey to the Buddhahood: yet evermore was there something wanting to his attainment of the knowledge that gives deliverance. On that night, under the Aṣvattha tree at Uruvelâ, the four truths at last dawn on him; they become the keystone of his knowledge; now

he is the Buddha. And when he goes to Benares to preach to the five monks what he has himself learned—‘Open ye your ears, ye monks; the deliverance from death is found: I instruct you, I preach the Law’—again there are those very four sacred truths which constitute the gospel of the newly-discovered path of peace. And throughout the long career of Buddha as a teacher, as it is depicted for us in the sacred texts, the discourse on the four truths is constantly coming to the front as that ‘which is the most prominent announcement of the Buddhas.’ The Buddhists describe ignorance as being the ultimate and most deeply-hidden root of all the suffering in the universe: if anyone inquires the ignorance of what is regarded as this fatal power, the uniform answer comes: the ignorance of the four sacred truths. And thus we find these propositions times without number in the canonical texts repeated, discussed, and their importance magnified in extravagant terms. It is difficult to avoid the presumption that the thoughts they convey and the wording in

which they are expressed go back to Buddha himself, or at anyrate to Buddha's first circle of followers.

We here repeat these propositions, as they have already met us in the sermon at Benares, in order to lay them as a foundation for our sketch of the Buddhist teaching.

'This, O monks, is the sacred truth of suffering: Birth is suffering, old age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, to be united with the unloved is suffering, to be separated from the loved is suffering, not to obtain what one desires is suffering, in short, the fivefold clinging to the earthly, is suffering.

'This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst for being which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there: the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.

'This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering: the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of

desire, letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving it no room.

‘This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the path which leads to the extinction of suffering: it is this sacred, eightfold path, to wit: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Self-concentration.’

The four truths give expression to Buddhist pessimism in its characteristic singularity.

They teach us first of all to direct attention to what this pessimism is not.

A widespread opinion finds the ultimate ground of this pessimism in the thought that, of all that is, the true existence is the Nothing.—The Nothing is alone certain. And if the world which surrounds us, or appears to surround us, is not wholly unreal, if it contains a certain, though ever so hollow a degree of existence, which cannot be ignored, this is a misfortune; and it is wrong, for right is only the Nothing. The wrong must be removed; we must remove it. Being,

which originated in and from nothing, must again go to nothing, for it is essentially nothing.

A strange error is this picture of what Buddhism is represented to have been. Whoever looks, not into the metaphysical speculations of later centuries, but into what the oldest traditions disclose to us of the teaching of Buddha, of the belief of that order of wandering mendicants, will not find therein one tenet of all these lucubrations regarding the Nothing. Neither openly expressed nor otherwise, neither in the foreground, nor in the farthest background of the religious thought, does the idea of the Nothing find a place. The tenets of the sacred truths show us clearly enough that, if this world has been weighed by the Buddhists and found wanting, the ground of this is not, that it, an illusory specious something, is in reality a mere nothing, but the sole ground is that it consists of suffering and nothing but suffering.

All life is suffering: this is the inexhaustible theme, which, now in the strict forms of

abstract philosophical discussion and now in the garment of poetical proverb, evermore comes ringing in our ears from Buddhist literature. We may take as the standard dialectic expression of this thought one of those discourses which Buddha, according to tradition, held at Benares soon after his first sermon before those five earliest disciples, to whom he first proclaimed the four sacred truths.

“And the Exalted One,” so the tradition narrates, “spoke to the five monks thus :

“The material form, O monks, is not the self. If material form were the self, O monks, this material form could not be subject to sickness, and a man should be able to say regarding his material form : my body shall be so and so ; my body shall not be so and so. But inasmuch, O monks, as material form is not the self, therefore is material form subject to sickness, and a man cannot say as regards his material form : my body shall be so and so ; my body shall not be so and so.

“The sensations, O monks, are not the self”—and then follows in detail regarding the

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then as given self is self-determining, and determined

sensations, the very same exposition which has been given regarding the body. Then comes the same detailed explanation regarding the remaining three component elements, the perceptions, the conformations, the consciousness, which in combination with the material form and the sensation constitute man's sentient state of being. Then Buddha goes on to say :

‘How think ye then, O monks, is material form permanent or impermanent?’

‘Impermanent, sire.’

‘But is that which is impermanent, sorrow or joy?’

‘Sorrow, sire.’

‘But if a man duly considers that which is impermanent, full of sorrow, subject to change, can he say: that is mine, that is I, that is myself?’

‘Sire, he cannot.’

Then follows the same exposition in similar terms regarding sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness: after which the discourse proceeds:

‘Therefore, O monks, whatever in the way

of material form, sensations, perceptions, etc., respectively, has ever been, will be, or is, either in our cases, or in the outer world, or strong or weak, or low or high, or far or near, it is not self: this must he in truth perceive, who possesses real knowledge. Whosoever regards things in this light, O monks, being a wise and noble hearer of the word, turns himself from material form, turns himself from sensation and perception, from conformation and consciousness. When he turns therefrom, he becomes free from desire; by the cessation of desire he obtains deliverance; in the delivered there arises a consciousness of his deliverance: re-birth is extinct, holiness is completed, duty is accomplished; there is no more a return to this world, he knows.'

The characteristic fundamental outlines of Brahmanical speculation turn up again in this discourse of Buddha's with dominant force. We have shown how that speculation works in the conception of a dualism. On one side the eternal immutable, which is endowed with the predicates of supreme freedom and happiness: that is the Brahma, and the Brahma is

nothing else but man's own true self. On the other side the world of origination and decease, birth, old age, death, in a word, of suffering. From this very dualism flow the ground-axioms, on which Buddha's discourse on the not-self proceeds: that proposition, which needed no proof for the Buddhists, that refuge can only be had where origination and decease have no dominion, the identity of the ideas of change and sorrow, the conviction that the self of man cannot belong to the world of evolution. The elements, in which the empirical state of man matures itself, are liable to continual change; the bodily as well as the spiritual life flows on, while one event is linked to another and closes up with another. Man stands helpless in the middle of this stream, the waves of which he cannot keep back or control. He cannot attain happiness or peace; how can happiness and peace be thought of, where there is no continuance, but only uncontrollable change holds sway? But if he cannot press this impermanence into his service, he can sever himself from it: where all contact

with the earthly ceases, there are deliverance and freedom.

At one point this discourse on the transitory nature of the earthly, shows a gap in its train of thought; to fill up which was, as we shall see later on, with a definite purpose omitted. One portion of the old Brahmanical dualism, the belief in an external world involving origination, decease and suffering, is adopted without reservation. What is the attitude of Buddha's doctrine with reference to the other side of this dualism? What does it teach regarding the eternal? It is said that whatever is subject to change and suffering cannot be the self. Is, then, the self something raised above this phenomenal world, separated from it, or has it no existence at all? Is deliverance a return of the self which is involved in change to itself, to its freedom? or is there nothing left, which in the disappearance of the transitory, shows itself real and permanent? We note for the present that the sermon at Benares leaves these questions open. The answer to them, so far as Buddhism has given any answer at

all to them, can claim our attention only in another connection.

We return to the Buddhist thoughts of the impermanence and sorrow of earthly things. The abstract and ideal development of these thoughts has been unfolded to us in the discourse quoted. But this is only a one-sided, imperfect expression. In a form, the most concrete, with the convincing and overwhelming force of a painful reality, there is ever present to the vision of the Buddhist, the picture of the universe and man enveloped in suffering. There are not shadows only, not clouds, which sorrow and death cast over human life, but sorrow and death pertain inseparably to every state of being. Through the delusion of happiness and youth the Buddhist looks on to the sorrow into which happiness and youth must soon turn. Behind the sorrowful present lies an immeasurable sorrowful past, and there extends equally immeasurably through the endless distance, which the belief in the transmigration of souls discloses to the awestruck imagination, a future full of sorrows for him who does not succeed in

attaining deliverance, 'putting an end to sorrow.'

'The pilgrimage of beings, my disciples,' Buddha says, 'has its beginning in eternity. No opening can be discovered, from which proceeding, creatures, mazed in ignorance, fettered by a thirst for being, stray and wander. What think ye, disciples, whether is more, the water which is in the four great oceans, or the tears which have flowed from you and have been shed by you, while ye strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept, because that was your portion which ye abhorred and that which ye loved was not your portion? A mother's death, a father's death, a brother's death, a sister's death, a son's death, a daughter's death, the loss of relations, the loss of property, all this have ye experienced through long ages. And while ye experienced this through long ages, more tears have flowed from you and have been shed by you, while ye strayed and wandered on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed and wept, because that was your portion which ye abhorred and that

which ye loved was not your portion, than all the water which is in the four great oceans.'

Birth, old age, death, are the leading forms in which the sorrow of earthly existence is depicted. 'If these things were not in the world, my disciples, the Perfect One, the holy, supreme Buddha, would not appear in the world, the law and the Doctrine, which the Perfect One propounds, would not shine in the world. What three things are they? Birth and old age and death.' Impermanence holds sway with the pitiless, inexorable power of natural necessity. 'There are five things which no Samana, and no Brahman, and no god, neither Mâra, nor Brahma, nor any being in the universe, can bring about. What five things are these? That what is subject to old age, should not grow old, that what is subject to sickness, should not be sick, that what is subject to death, should not die, that what is subject to decay, should not decay, that what is liable to pass away, should not pass away—this can no Samana bring about, nor any Brahman, nor any god, neither Mâra, nor Brahma, nor any being in the universe.'

The actions of men who pursue earthly pleasures, are under the curse of impermanence, illusion, vanity. Paining, deceiving, sweeping, destroying, turning hoped-for enjoyments into sorrow and death, the inexorable necessity of progression holds dominion over all life and hopes. Whoever seeks to acquire worldly goods, the merchant, the farmer, the shepherd, the soldier, the civil servant of the crown, must expose himself to the inconveniences of heat and cold, the bite of serpents, to hunger and to thirst. If he does not gain the object of his pursuit, he laments and grieves: in vain did I exert myself, in vain was all my labour. If he attains his object, he must guard his gains with anxiety and trouble, that kings or robbers may not wrest them from him, that fire may not burn them, that floods may not sweep them away, that they may not fall into the hands of hostile relations. To gain property and gratify desire, kings wage war, father or mother quarrels with son, brother with brother, warriors make their arrows fly, and their swords flash, and they brave death and mortal agonies. To gain

pleasure, men break their word, commit robbery, murder, adultery: they endure excruciating tortures as human punishments, and when their bodies succumb in death, they go the way of evil-doers; in the kingdoms of hell they will be born again to new torments.

And these same powers of decadence and sorrow, to which human life is subject and which extend through all hells, have also power over heaven. The gods may have assured to them an incomparably longer and more happy state of being than earthly humanity: still, even they are not immortal or free from sorrow. 'The three and thirty gods, and the Yâma-gods, the happy deities, the gods who joy in creation, and the ruling gods, bound by the chain of desire, return within the power of Mâra. The whole universe is consumed with flames, the whole universe is enveloped in smoke, the whole universe is on fire, the whole universe trembles.'

The proverbial wisdom of the 'Dhammapada' gives the truest picture of all of Buddhist thought and feeling, how the disciples

of Buddha saw in everything earthly the one thing, vanity and decay.

‘How can ye be gay,’ it is said, ‘how can ye indulge desire? Evermore the flames burn. Darkness surrounds you : will ye not seek the light?’

‘Man gathers flowers ; his heart is set on pleasure. Death comes upon him, like the floods of water on a village, and sweeps him away.’

‘Man gathers flowers ; his heart is set on pleasure. The Destroyer brings the man of insatiable desire within his clutch.’

‘Neither in the ærial region, nor in the depths of the sea, nor if thou piercest into the clefts of the mountains, wilt thou find any place on this earth where the hand of death will not reach thee.’

‘From merriment cometh sorrow : from merriment cometh fear. Whosoever is free from merriment, for him there is no sorrow : whence should come fear to him?’

‘From love cometh sorrow : from love cometh fear : whosoever is free from love, for him there is no sorrow : whence should come fear to him?’

‘Whoso looketh down upon the world, as though he gazed on a mere bubble or a dream, him the ruler Death beholdeth not.’

‘Whosoever hath traversed the evil, trackless path of the Sansâra, of error, who hath pushed on to the end, hath reached the shore, rich in meditation, free from desire, free from irresolution, who, freed from being, hath found rest, him I call a true Brahman.’

Is it dialectic only with its comparison between the notions of becoming, decease, sorrow, which causes the world to appear to the Buddhist that immeasurable, painful waste?

It is true, indeed, that wherever the popular mind cannot obtain a sure anchorage for itself in the firm and clear realities of practical life, where it is under the overpowering influence of thought, of dreamy fancy without any counterpoise, there speculation, with its real or supposed logical conclusions, gains an incalculable influence as to which shall be the answer given by individuals as well as collective masses, to the question whether life is worth living. But it is not merely the speculation

of the Indian which furnishes the answer. Speculation is bound up with his wishes and hopes; it shares with them the character of impatient impetuosity, untrained to deal with realities. Thought, which passes over everything, and arrives with one bound at the absolute, finds its counterpart in a craving whose impatience pushes from itself all goods, which are not the supreme, everlasting good. But what is the supreme good? As the glow of the Indian sun causes rest in cool shades to appear to the wearied body the good of goods, so also with the wearied soul, rest, eternal rest, is the only thing for which it craves. Of this life, which promises to the cheerful sturdiness of an industrious, struggling people, thousands of gifts and thousands of good things, the Indian merely scrapes the surface and turns away from it in weariness. The slave is tired of his servitude, the despot is still sooner and more completely wearied of his despotism, its unlimited enjoyment. The Buddhist propositions regarding the sorrow of all that is transitory are the sharp and trenchant expression, which these dis-

positions of the Indian people have framed for themselves, an expression, the commentary to which is written not alone in the sermon at Benares and in the apothegms of the 'Dhammapada,' but in indelible characters in the whole of the mournful history of this unhappy people.

In some of the sayings, which we have quoted from the 'Dhammapada,' the thought of the impermanence and unsubstantiality of the earthly world is blended with the praise of him who has succeeded in breaking the fetters which bind him to the prison-house. And this brings us to fill in a necessary part without which our sketch of the Buddhist pessimism would be very incomplete. Some writers have often represented the tone prevailing in it, as if it were peculiarly characterised by a feeling of melancholy which bewails in endless grief the unreality of being. In this they have altogether misunderstood Buddhism. The true Buddhist certainly sees in this world a state of continuous sorrow, but this sorrow only awakes in him a feeling of compassion for those who are yet in the world; for him-

self he feels no sorrow or compassion, for he knows he is near his goal which stands awaiting him, noble beyond all else. Is this goal annihilation? Perhaps it is. We cannot here answer this question yet. But be this as it may, the Buddhist is far from bewailing as a misfortune, or as an injury, to which he must submit with sad resignation as to an unalterable destiny, the constitution of things, which has provided just this goal and only this goal for man's existence. He seeks Nirvâna with the same joyous sense of victory in prospect, with which the Christian looks forward to his goal, everlasting life.

The following sayings also of the 'Dhammapada' reflect this spirit:—

'He whose appetites are at rest, like steeds thoroughly broken in by the trainer, he who has put away pride, who is free from impurity, him thus perfect the gods themselves envy.'

'In perfect joy we live, without enemy in this world of enmity; among men filled with enmity we dwell without enmity.'

'In perfect joy we live, hale among the sick; among sick men we dwell without sickness.'

‘In perfect joy we live, without toil among toilers ; among toiling men we dwell without toil.’

‘In perfect joy we live, to whom belongeth nothing. Our scrip is pleasantness, as of the effulgent gods.’

‘The monk who dwells in an empty abode, whose soul is full of peace, enjoys superhuman felicity, gazing solely on the truth.’

It is not enough to say that the final goal to which the Buddhist strives to pass as an escape from the sorrow of the world, is Nirvâna. It is also necessary to any delineation of Buddhism to note as a fact assured beyond all doubt, that internal cheerfulness, infinitely surpassing all mere resignation, with which the Buddhist pursues this end.

THE FORMULA OF THE CAUSAL NEXUS

IN order to understand the first of the four sacred truths, the tenet of suffering, we needed to acquaint ourselves only with the criticism which Buddha's discourses give of the events

of daily life, the dispositions and inclinations which govern our actions, and the consequences which follow from them. The tenets of the origin of suffering and its extinction bring us out of the domain of the popular speculative view of life, into the realms of abstract notions of Buddhist dogmatic, and therewith into a region where the ground vanishes from beneath our feet at every step.

‘This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the origin of suffering: it is the thirst for being, which leads from birth to birth, together with lust and desire, which finds gratification here and there: the thirst for pleasures, the thirst for being, the thirst for power.

‘This, O monks, is the sacred truth of the extinction of suffering: the extinction of this thirst by complete annihilation of desire, letting it go, expelling it, separating oneself from it, giving it no room.’

The state of being, as it surrounds us in this world, with its restless oscillation between origination and decease, is our misfortune. The ground of our existing is our will. This is our besetting sin, that we will to be, that

we will to be ourselves, that we fondly will our being to blend with other being and extend. The negation of the will to be, cuts off being, for us at least. Thus the two tenets of the origin of suffering and its cessation, comprise the sum of all human action and all human destiny.

But the sum must be resolved into the elements of which it is composed. The former tenet, as we have quoted it, speaks of the thirst for being, which leads from one birth to another. Whence this birth? It, the ground of our being, on what ground does it itself rest? And what law, what mechanism is there, what intermediate links are there, by which the repetition of our being, re-birth with its sorrows, is connected with it?

The very oldest traditions from which we draw our account of Buddhist speculations, show that these questions had been asked. People found the brief and concise setting of the sacred truths obviously inadequate and two formulas, or, more correctly speaking, a bipartite formula was drawn up, which was intended to supplement, or rather strengthen,

the tenets regarding the origin of suffering and its cessation, the formula of the 'Causal Nexus of being.'

Tradition assigns to this formula the next place in sacredness to the four truths. The knowledge of the four verities is what makes Buddha Buddha; the formula of the causal nexus, which had occurred to him already before the attainment of Buddhahood had been vouchsafed to him, occupied his mind while he sits under the tree of knowledge, 'enjoying the happiness of deliverance.' And when he combats the fear that his gospel will not be comprehended on earth, it is especially the law of the causal nexus of being, to which this fear attaches: 'Men who move in a worldly sphere, who have their lot cast and find their enjoyments in a worldly sphere, will find this matter hard to grasp, the law of causality, the chain of causes and effects.'

Occasionally the sacred texts make the formula of the causal nexus actually an integral portion of the sacred truths themselves, by omitting the second and third truths and

inserting in their stead this formula in its two branches.

The propositions of the causal nexus of being, in the form which is most commonly met with in the traditions, and which may be regarded as the most ancient form, with their double, their positive and negative, arrangement—'forwards and backwards,' as the texts express themselves — are worded as follows :—

'From ignorance come conformations; from conformations comes consciousness; from consciousness come name and corporeal form; from name and corporeal form come the six fields; from the six fields comes contact between the senses and their objects; from contact comes sensation; from sensation comes thirst, or desire; from thirst comes clinging to existence; from clinging to existence comes being; from being comes birth; from birth come old age and death, pain and lamentation, suffering, anxiety and despair. This is the origin of the whole realm of suffering.

'But if ignorance be removed by the com-

plete extinction of desire, this brings about the removal of conformations; by the removal of conformations, consciousness is removed; by the removal of consciousness, name and corporeal form are removed; by the removal of name and corporeal form, the six fields are removed; by the removal of the six fields, contact between the senses and their objects, is removed; by the removal of contact, sensation is removed; by the removal of sensation, thirst is removed; by the removal of thirst, the clinging to existence is removed; by the removal of the clinging to existence, being is removed; by the removal of being, birth is removed; by the removal of birth, old age and death, pain and lamentation, suffering, anxiety, and despair are removed. This is the removal of the whole realm of suffering.'

The attempt is here made by the use of brief pithy phrases to trace back the suffering of all earthly existence to its most remote roots. The answer is as confused as the question was bold. It is utterly impossible for anyone who seeks to find out its meaning, to trace from beginning to end a connected

meaning in this formula. Most of the links of the chain, taken separately, admit of a passable interpretation; many arrange themselves also in groups together, and their articulation may be said to be not incomprehensible; but between these groups there remain contradictions and impossibilities in the consecutive arrangement of priority and sequence, which an exact exegesis has not the power, and is not permitted to clear up. Even the ancient Buddhist theologians, who were by no means accustomed to construe too strictly in every case the requirement that 'a meaning must underlie words,' found here a stumbling-block; the variations, with which the formula of causality is found in the sacred writings, afford unmistakable evidence of this.

THE THIRD LINK IN THE CHAIN OF CAUSALITY

It seems advisable for the explanation of the formula of causality not to begin at the beginning. The first links of the series—the ultimate ground of earthly existence, ignor-

ance, and the 'conformations' which develop themselves from ignorance — are in their nature much more difficult of comprehension by concrete explanation than the following categories. We shall return later on to the attempt here made to denominate the cause of causes; at present we begin where consciousness appears in the chain of categories and with it we step upon the ground of conceivable reality. The sacred texts also apparently justify us in proceeding thus, as they themselves often begin the chain of causality with the category of consciousness, omitting the first members. 'Ignorance' and 'conformations' are evidently among the things, of which Buddhist dogmatists have, as far as possible, omitted to speak. 'From consciousness'—runs the third proposition in the series—'come name and corporeal form.'

One of the dialogues on this subject in the collection of the sacred texts, in which Buddha unfolds to his beloved disciple, Ânanda, the greater part of the formula of causality, gives us a very concrete explanation of this proposition, which undoubtedly

expounds the original meaning. 'If consciousness, Ânanda, did not enter into the womb, would name and corporeal form arise in the womb?'—'No, sire.'—'And if consciousness, Ânanda, after it has entered into the womb, were again to leave its place, would name and corporeal form be born into this life?'—'No, sire.'—'And if consciousness, Ânanda, were again lost to the boy or to the girl, while they were yet small, would name and corporeal form attain growth, increase, progress?'—'No, sire.'

Thus the proposition, 'From consciousness come name and corporeal form,' leads us to the moment of conception. We shall, when treating of the Buddhist notions of soul and metempsychosis, come to understand from another point of view still more completely the ideas which meet us here; here we must only state this much, that in death the other elements, which constitute the body-cum-spirit state of being of a man, are dissolved; the body, the sensations, the perceptions vanish, but not the consciousness. Consciousness forms, so long as the existent

is bound in metempsychosis, the connecting link which connects the old existences with the new; not till the bourne of deliverance, the Nirvâna, is reached, does the consciousness also of the dying perfect one vanish into nothing. As the human body is formed out of the material elements, so consciousness also is regarded as consisting of an analogous spiritual element. 'There are six elements, my disciples,' says Buddha, 'the element of earth, the element of water, the element of fire, the element of air, the element of æther, the element of consciousness.' The stuff of which consciousness is made is highly exalted above the other elements; it dwells, as it were, in its own world. 'Consciousness,' it is written, 'the indemonstrable, the everlasting, the all-illuminating; it is where nor water nor earth, nor fire nor air, finds a place, in which greatness and smallness, weakness and strength, beauty and non-beauty, in which name and material form cease altogether.'

That which in the dying man is constructed of this highest of earthly elements, the consciousness-element, becomes at the moment

when the old being dies the germ of a new being; this germ of consciousness seeks and finds in the womb the material stuffs, from which it forms a new state of being coined in name and material form.

But as name and material form rest on consciousness, so also the latter rests on the former. Those passages in the texts, which do not carry back the line of causality to the ultimate end, to Ignorance, are wont to make it run in a circle with these two categories interchangeably dependent on one another. We have already quoted from Buddha's and Ânanda's dialogue the passage bearing on the one side of this subject, on the allegation that name and material form rest on consciousness.

On the other side, then, it is said in the same conversation: 'If, Ânanda, consciousness were not to find name and material form as its resting-place, would then birth, old age, and death, the origin and development of sorrow, reveal themselves in succession?'—'No, sire, they would not.'—'Therefore, Ânanda, is this the cause, this the ground, this the origin, this the basis of consciousness: name and

material form.' And thus comprehensively are the bases on which all nameability and all existence of the existent, their birth, death, and re-birth, rest, described as 'name and material form combined with consciousness.'

We extract from other texts some more characteristic passages for the elucidation of this subject:

'What must there be, in order that there may be name and material form? Whence come name and material form?—Consciousness must be in order that there may be name and material form; from consciousness come name and material form.—What must there be in order that there may be consciousness? Whence comes consciousness?—Name and material form must be, in order that there may be consciousness; from name and material form comes consciousness. Then, my disciples, the Bodhisatti Vipassi thought: consciousness conversely depends on name and material form: the chain goes no farther.'

And in another place the following simile is put into the mouth of Sâriputta, the greatest authority among Buddha's disciples: 'My

friend, as two bundles of sticks leaning against each other stand, so also, my friend, consciousness grows out of name and material form, and name and material form out of consciousness.' It 'grows out of' it—this is not intended to convey that consciousness is the element, out of which name and material form are made: it is merely tantamount to saying, that consciousness is the forming power, which originates from the material elements or being, which bears a name and is clothed with a body.

THE FOURTH TO THE ELEVENTH LINK IN THE CHAIN OF CAUSALITY

WHEN the spirit has found its body and the body found the spirit and united itself to it, this, being compounded of spirit and body, provides itself with organs to put itself into communication with the external world. 'From name and material form,' runs the fourth term of the formula, 'come the six fields'—the 'six fields of the subject,' eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, as organ for sensations

of touch, understanding, and the six corresponding fields of the object world, corporeal forms as the object of the eye, and so on—sounds, odours, taste, tangibility, and last, as the object of the understanding, thoughts or ideas, notions which are represented evidently as something standing present before the thinking faculty in quite an objective existence and realised by it, in the same way as visible bodies before the eyes.

The organs of the subject now step into communication with the objective world. 'From the six fields comes contact. From contact comes sensation.' We meet also with a certainly not very clearly expressed, and at the same time scarcely well-thought-out, attempt, to still further analyse these processes. Before the organ of sense grasps the object, an operation of the central organ, consciousness, on the organ of sense in requisition, gives it the command to join communication with the object, apparently in such a way that the former sets the latter in a certain manner to work. And when this communication follows, then by means of it, besides the two

elements primarily concerned, the organ of sense and the object, the third element, consciousness, the author and supervisor of this communication, is at the same time in play. It is somewhat in this way, I believe, that we must understand the following proposition which recurs not unfrequently in the sacred texts: 'From the eye and visible bodies comes consciousness, directed to the eye, the conjunction of the three, the contact.' And similarly in that address of Buddha's already quoted, the series of ideas and processes treated of in this connection, is expressed in the following fashion:— 'Eye — body — consciousness directed to the eye — contact of the eye, with the objects, — the sensation, which arises from the contact of the eye, with the objects, be it pleasure be it pain, be it neither pain nor pleasure.' Of course similar processes take place in the case of the other organs of sense to those which occur in the case of the eye.

The formula goes on: 'From sensation arises thirst.' Here the point is reached, which the tenets of the origin and the extinc-

tion of suffering had made a starting-point, 'the thirst which leads from rebirth to rebirth,' not the ultimate but the most powerful cause of suffering. We be, because we thirst for being; we suffer, because we thirst for pleasure. 'Whomsoever it holds in subjection, that thirst, that contemptible thing, which pours its venom through the world, his suffering grows as the grass grows. Whosoever holds it in subjection, that thirst, that contemptible thing, which it is difficult to escape in this world, suffering falls off from him as the waterdrops from the lotus flowers.' 'As, if the root be uninjured, even a hewn tree grows up anew mightily, so, if the excitement of thirst be not wholly dead, suffering ever and anon breaks out again.' 'The gift of the truth transcends all other gifts; the sweetness of the truth transcends all other sweetness; joy in the truth surpasses all other joy; the extermination of thirst, this subdues all suffering.'

The idea of thirst, usually divided by scholastic teaching into six heads, according to whichever one or other of the six senses it is that has caused the sensation which gener-

ates the thirst, is usually met in close connection with the category, which follows next in the formula of causality, that of clinging—to wit, clinging to the external world, to existence. ‘From thirst,’ says the formula, ‘comes clinging.’ The Pâli word for ‘clinging’ involves a metaphor which is highly descriptive of the idea which is here underlying. The flame, which, as a scarcely material existence, freely urges its way on, spreading and rising, ‘clings’ still to the fuel: it cannot be contemplated without fuel. Even if the flame be carried into the distance by the wind, there is still a fuel there to which it clings, the wind. The existence of every being is like the flame; like the flame, our being is to a certain extent a continuous process of burning. Deliverance is the extinction of the flame; but the flame is not extinguished so long as it is supplied with fuel to which it ‘clings.’ And as the flame clinging to the wind presses on into far off distance, so also the flame of our existence is not laid on the spot, but presses on in transmigration to far off distances, from heaven to hell, from

hells to heaven. What is it, to which the flame-resembling process of our being clings in the moment of such transmigration, like the flame to the wind? 'Then, say I, the being of the existent has thirst as the substratum to which it clings; for this thirst, O Vaccha, is at the moment of transmigration the being's clinging.'

Even the slightest residue of clinging prevents deliverance. Whosoever separates from everything that is transitory, whosoever attains the most perfect quietude, but clings with his thought even to this very quietude and is glad of this quietude, he is still in bondage. The best, but still the minimum of clinging is the clinging to the condition of deepest self-suppression where consciousness and non-consciousness are alike overcome; complete deliverance has overcome even this last clinging. 'By the cessation of clinging his soul was delivered from all sinful existence'—this is the standing phrase with which the texts intimate that a disciple of Buddha has become a partaker of holiness, of deliverance.

Up to this point the connection of the causes and effects in our chain of categories was tolerably clear. The impression will have been formed that the being whose conception was the starting-point of the series, has long since, in the later terms of the formula, entered on real life, struggles with the outer world, the clinging to its goods. In this light also the oft-mentioned dialogue between Buddha and Ânanda puts it; to the proposition; 'from sensation comes thirst,' it appends a picture of human toil and struggles for pleasure and gain: there are met the words seek, obtain, possession, guard, envy, quarrel, strife, backbiting, lying. It is therefore very surprising, when the formula of causality, which in this theory of the world seemed to have already arrived at the dealings of social life, at the struggle of egoism against egoism, suddenly turns back and causes that being whom we have already seen taking part in the transactions of the world to be born. The formula runs thus in its three last terms: 'From clinging to existence comes becoming; from becoming comes birth; from birth

come old age, and death, pain and lamentation, sorrow, anxiety and despair.'

It seems to me evident that there is here a gap in the train of thought which our efforts of elucidation cannot, and are not even permitted to bridge over. What was more ready than to recognise in birth the sources from which come old age and death? 'If three things were not in the world, my disciples, the Perfect One, the holy, supreme Buddha, would not appear in the world, the Law and the Doctrine, which the Perfect One propounds, would not shine in the world. What three things are they? Birth and old age and death.' Thus these so closely associated ideas were thrown together in the two last terms of the causal-chain, but it was omitted to weld these new groups of categories with those preceding, so as to form a harmonious whole. The idea of 'becoming,' which was thrust into the middle, inevitably creates by its very vagueness—which you may regard as you like, as either of very little or of very great import—the impression as if it were intended for a shift or sleight to get over the break in continuity.

We close with some proverbs of the 'Dhammapada,' which translate these last terms of the formula of causality from the language of ideas into that of emotion and poetry.

'Behold this painted picture, the frail, scarred form of corporeity, wherein many an aspiration dwells, which has no happiness and no stability.'

'To age comes as its lot this form, frail, a nest of diseases: the perishable body fails: life in it is death.'

'Those bleached bones, which are thrown out yonder like gourds in the autumn—when anyone sees them, how can he be happy?'

'Esteeming this body like a bubble, regarding it as a mirage, breaking the flower-shafts of the tempter, press on to the bourne where the monarch Death shall gaze no more on thee.'

But death is not the end of the long chain of suffering: upon death follows re-birth, new sorrow, another death.

THE FIRST AND SECOND LINKS OF THE
CAUSAL-CHAIN .

FROM the end of the formula of causality we must turn back to its beginning, to speak of the two first members of the series.

‘From ignorance’ the formula begins, ‘come conformations.’

‘From conformations comes consciousness.’

If ignorance be designated the ultimate source of suffering, the question must arise: Who is here the ignorant? What is that of which this ignorance is ignorant?

It is tempting, by the place assigned to the category of ‘ignorance,’ at the beginning of the whole line of causality, to allow one’s self to be carried away by interpretations which see in this idea, as it were, a cosmogonical power working at the primitive foundation of things. Or one might be tempted to read in it the history of a crime preceding all time, an unlucky act by which the non-‘bëent’ had doomed itself to be ‘bëent’—that is, to suffer. The philosophy of later Brahmanical schools speaks in similar fashion of Mâyâ, that power of delusion, which causes the de-

ceptive picture of the created world to appear to the One, the uncreated, as if it were 'bëent.' 'He, the knowing, gave himself up to confused fancies, and when he fell into the slumber prepared for him by Mâyâ, he beheld in amazement multiform dreams: I am, this is my father, this my mother, this my field, this my kingdom.' Some have compared the ignorance of Buddhism with this Mâyâ of the Brahmanical theosophy; only with this note that, as Mâyâ is the deceptive reflection of the true everlasting 'bëent,' so ignorance is the reflection of that which, as they thought, took the place of the everlasting 'bëent' for the Buddhists—that is, the Nothing.

Interpretations of this kind, which find in the category of ignorance an expression for the deceptive Nothing appearing as a 'bëent,' completely correspond in fact with the explicit utterances of later Buddhist texts. The construction alluded to is met with in the great standard text-book of mystic-nihilistic speculation, which was an authority among Buddhist theologians in the first century after Christ. In this most sacredly esteemed text,

the 'Perfection of Knowledge,' we read as follows:—

Buddha said to Sâriputra: 'Things, O Sâriputra, do not exist as ordinary and ignorant men, clinging closely to them, fancy, who are not instructed on the subject.' Sâriputra said: 'How then, sire, do they exist?' Buddha answered: 'They exist, O Sâriputra, in so far that they do not exist in truth. And inasmuch as they do not exist, they are called Avidyâ—that is, the non-existent, or ignorance. To this ordinary ignorant men, who are not instructed on the matter, cling closely. They represent to themselves all things, of which in truth not one has any existence, as existent.' Then Buddha asks the holy disciple Subhûti: 'What thinkest thou now, Subhûti, is illusion one thing and material form another? Is illusion one thing and sensations another? perceptions another? conformations another? consciousness another?' Subhûti answered: 'Nay, Master, nay; illusion is not one thing and material form another. Material form is itself the illusion and the illusion itself is material form, sensations, perceptions, con-

formations, and consciousness.' And Buddha says: 'It is in the nature of the illusion that that lies which makes beings what they are. It is, O Subhûti, as if a clever magician, or the pupil of a clever magician, caused a vast concourse of men to appear at a cross road, where four great thoroughfares meet, and, having caused them to appear, caused them again to vanish.'

Thus the speculations contained in the treatise on the 'Perfection of Knowledge,' make ignorance the ultimate cause of the appearing of the world and at the same time the essential character of its state of being, which is in truth rather not-being: ignorance and not-being here coincide.

We have taken this glance at this later phase of the development of Buddhist thought merely with the intention of being put on our guard against assigning any of these ideas to ancient Buddhism and against framing any interpretation of the old texts, especially of the formula of causality, influenced by such a process. Inquirers, who had access to the propositions of the chain of causes and effects

only in the garb of that later period, found themselves in fact in a not very different position from that in which a historian of Christianity would be placed, if he were directed to string together some account of the teaching of Jesus from the phantasms of the Gnostics.

The course, which we must follow, is clearly enough indicated: we have only to inquire from the oldest tradition of Buddhist dogmatics, obtainable in the Pâli texts, what is that ignorance, the ultimate ground of all suffering.

Wherever in the sacred Pâli literature this question is mooted, as well in the addresses which Buddha himself and his chief disciples are said to have delivered, as in the systematising compilations of a later generation of dogmatists, the answer is invariably the same. The ignorance is not declared to be anything in the way of a cosmic power, nor anything like a mysterious original sin, but it is within the range of earthly tangible reality. The ignorance is the ignorance of the four sacred truths. Sâriputta says: 'Not to know suffer-

ing, friend, not to know the origin of suffering, not to know the extinction of suffering, not to know the path to the extinction of suffering: this, O friend, is called ignorance.' 'Not seeing the four sacred truths as they are, I have wandered on the long path from one birth to another. Now have I seen them: the current of being is stemmed. The root of suffering is destroyed: there is henceforward no re-birth.'

The method and procedure of old-Buddhist dogmatic is here clearly exemplified: when it tracks personality back on its way through the world of sorrow beyond that moment when consciousness clothes itself with 'name and material form'—that is, to the moment of conception, their thought is not on that account lost in the arcanum of pre-existence prior to all consciousness, but it makes this empirical existence take root in another equally empirical conceivable existence. That ignorance, which is stated to be the ultimate ground of your present state of being, involves that, at an earlier date, a being who then occupied your place, a being who has lived in not less tangible reality than you

now do, on earth or in a heaven or in a hell, has failed to possess a specific knowledge, definable in certain words, and bound for that reason in the bonds of transmigration, must have brought about your present state of being. We saw that old-Brahman speculation, in reply to the question, what is the power which holds the spirit bound in impermanence, what enemy must be overcome in order that deliverance may be obtained, has answered with the very same conception, that of ignorance. With the Brahmans this ignorance was the ignorance of the identity of the particular ego with that great ego, which is the source and the sum of all egoity. Buddhism has given up these thoughts and all metaphysical hypotheses which rendered them possible, but still the word proved itself more lasting than the thought: now, as before, the ultimate root of all suffering continues to be called 'ignorance.' And there it was natural, when inquiry was made as to the illatent import of this idea of 'ignorance,' it should be described as non-possession of that knowledge, the possession of which appeared

to the Buddhist the highest aim of every struggle for deliverance, the knowledge of suffering, of the origin of suffering, of the extinction of suffering, and of the path to the extinction of suffering. The ultimate root of all suffering is the delusion which conceals from man the true being and the true value of the system of the universe. Being is suffering: but ignorance totally deceives us as to this suffering: it causes us to see instead of suffering a phantom of happiness and pleasure.

And the next consequence of this delusion? The formula of causality expresses it in its first proposition: 'From ignorance come conformations.'

Here the impossibility of Buddhist terminology finding adequate expression in our language makes itself keenly felt. The word Sankhâra is derived from a verb which signifies to arrange, adorn, prepare. Sankhâra is both the preparation and that prepared; but these two coincide in Buddhist conceptions much more than in ours, for to the Buddhist mind—we shall have more to say on this point later on—the made has exis-

tence only and solely in the process of being made; whatever is, is not so much a something which is, as the process rather of a being, self-generating and self-again-consuming being. Now, nothing can be imagined at any time anyhow coming under observation in this world of becoming and decease, to which the idea of forming or of becoming formed does not attach, and thus we shall further on meet with the word Sankhâra as one of the most general expressions for everything that is in it. In our formula, however, which has not to do with the universe, but with the origin and decease of personal life, the idea of Sankhâra suitable to the connection is a much narrower one: here a forming is meant which is consummated in the domain of the personal body-cum-spirit existence. We might translate Sankhâra directly by 'actions,' if we understand this word in the wide sense in which it includes also at the same time the internal 'actions,' the will and wish. The old scholastic teachers divide 'conformations' or 'actions' under two heads, always in three classes, either viewing

them as corresponding to the three categories of thought, word, and deed, or proceeding on the basis of a moral principle of division, into conformations which have a pure end in view, those which have an impure end in view, and those which have a neutral end in view. 'Pure' and 'impure,' in the language of Indian theology, are nothing more than moral merit, which will be rewarded hereafter, and guilt, which finds its punishment hereafter. Thus the category of 'conformations' brings us to the doctrine of Kamma—i.e. the law of moral retribution, which traces out for the wandering soul its path through the world of earthly being, through heaven and hell.

What we are, is the fruit of that which we have done. As an acquisition of pre-Buddhist speculation we have already come across the proposition: 'whatsoever he does, to a corresponding state he attains'; and Buddhism teaches: 'My action is my possession, my action is my inheritance, my action is the womb which bears me. My action is the race to which I am akin, my action is my

refuge.' What appears to man to be his body is in truth 'the action of his past state, which then assuming a form, realised through his endeavour, has become endowed with a tangible existence.' The law of causality, substantially regarded by Buddhist speculation as a natural law, here assumes the form of a moral power influencing the universe. No man can escape the effect of his actions. 'Not in the heavens,' it is said in the Dhammapada, 'not in the midst of the sea, not if thou hidest thyself away in the clefts of the mountains, wilt thou find a place on earth where thou canst escape the fruit of thy evil actions.' 'Him, who has been long travelling and who returns home in safety, the welcome of relatives, friends and acquaintances, awaits. So him, who has done good works, when he passes over from this world into the hereafter, his good works welcome, like relatives a home-returning friend.' Through the five regions of transmigration, through divine and human existence, and through the realms of goblins, of animal-life and hells, the power of our actions leads us. The

exaltation of heaven awaits the good. The warders of hell bring up the wicked before the throne of king Yama; who asks him, whether he, when he lived on earth, did not see the five messengers of the gods who are sent for the admonition of men, the five visions of human weakness and human suffering; the child, the old man, the sick man, the criminal suffering punishment, and the dead man. Of course he has seen them. 'And hast thou, O man, when thou reachedst riper years and becamest old, not thought within thyself: "I also am subject to birth, old age, and death; I am not exempt from the dominion of birth, old age, and death. Well, then! I will do good in thought, word and deed"?' But he answers: 'I was unable to do it, sire; I neglected it, sire, in my frivolity.' Then king Yama addresses him: 'These thy evil deeds thy mother hath not done, nor thy father, nor thy brother, nor thy sister, nor thy friends and advisers, nor thy connections and blood-relations, nor ascetics, nor Brahmans, nor gods. It is thou alone that hast done these evil actions;

thou alone shalt gather their fruit.' And the warders of hell drag him to the places of torment. He is riveted to glowing iron, plunged in glowing seas of blood, or tortured on mountains of burning coals, and he dies not until the very last residue of his guilt has been expiated.

It is quite in keeping with the spirit of the old dogmatic, when a later text compares the cycle of ever-recurring existence, connected throughout by Kamma, by merit and demerit, to a wheel which recoils upon itself, or with the reciprocal generation of the tree from the seed, of the seed corn from the fruit of the tree, of the hen from the egg, and of the egg from the hen. Eye and ear, body and spirit, move into contact with the external world; thus arises sensation, desire, action; the fruit of the action is the new eye, and the new ear, the new body and the new spirit, which will go to make up the being in the coming existence.

It is this group of thoughts, associated with the idea of Kamma, which we must next take up in order to render intelligible the

'rôle' which the category of the Sankhâras plays in the formula of causality. Yet the sacred texts point also to another more distinct interpretation of this category, which lies somewhat in another direction.

In one of the great collections of Buddha's addresses, we meet a sermon 'on re-birth according to the Sankhâras.' Now this very 're-birth according to the Sankhâras' is that with which the formula of causality has to do at the place where we are now arrived, for this formula speaks here precisely of the Sankhâras, in so far as they cause the consciousness of the dying being to become the germ of a new being, 'from the Sankhâras comes consciousness. From consciousness

come name and material form.' We are thus entitled to expect in the expositions of this Sûtra a commentary upon this part of the formula of causality: and in fact we find it.

It runs as follows:—

'It happens, my disciples, that a monk, endowed with faith, endowed with righteousness, endowed with knowledge of the doctrine, with resignation, with wisdom, communes thus

with himself: "Now then, could I, when my body is dissolved in death, obtain re-birth in a powerful, princely family." He thinks this thought, dwells on this thought, cherishes this thought. These Sankhâras and internal conditions which he has thus cherished within him and fostered, lead to his re-birth in such an existence. This, disciples, is the avenue, this the path, which leads to re-birth in such an existence.'

The train of thought is then similarly repeated in detail with reference to the several classes of men and gods. The believing and righteous monk, who has in his lifetime directed his thoughts and wishes to these forms of existence, will be re-born in them. So on up to the highest classes of gods, who are separated from Nirvâna by a diminishing residuum of the earthly, the 'gods of the spheres, in which there is neither perception nor absence of perception.' And finally, in the last place, the Sûtra speaks of the monk 'who thus reflects: "Now then, were I but able, by the destruction of sinful existence, to discover and behold for myself the sinless state

of deliverance in action and in knowledge even in this present life, and find in it my abode." He will, by the destruction of sinful existence, discover and behold for himself the sinless state of deliverance in action and in knowledge even in this present life, and will find in it his abode. This monk, O disciples, will never be re-born.'

We see what are here the Sankhâras, which have a decisive influence on the re-birth of man: the inner form of the spirit, which anon readily contents itself with the aspirations of the spheres of earthly greatness, raises itself anon with purer energy to the worlds of the gods, even to the highest altitudes, and soars in re-birth to existence actually in these altitudes. Still, however, sorrow pushes even into the most exalted regions. The wise man, therefore, aspires neither to human nor divine happiness; his self-forming directs itself only to the cessation of all conformations. The ignorant, on the contrary, led astray by lies, ignorance of the suffering of all states of being, becomes a settler in the world of impermanence. As the fuel will not permit the

flame to be extinguished, so this inner forming of one's self, this hankering after an impermanent object, holds the dying being fast bound to existence. The spirit clothes itself with a new garment of name and material form, and in a new existence repeats the old cycle of birth and old age, of sorrow and death.

BEING AND BECOMING—SUBSTANCE AND CONFORMATION

WE have attempted to explain the several elements of the line of causality: it remains for us, viewing it as a whole, to point out what view of the structure of being, if the expression be admissible, what answer to the question: what it amounts to, and what is implied by, anything being stated to be, is given in the formula itself and in the elsewhere-occurring utterances connected therewith in the Buddhist texts. First of all, however, we must here insert a proviso: we have only to deal with that which in this material transient realm of things, in which we live,

constitutes being. The question whether there is for Buddhism, beyond this form of being, another realm of life, existing under peculiar laws, whether there is beyond the temporal an everlasting, cannot yet be grappled.

As a suitable starting-point for our inquiry there is a discourse put into Buddha's mouth in sacred tradition, concerning the reflections by which a monk striving for deliverance is led to dissociation from joy and pain. It is therein recorded :

‘In this monk, O disciples, who thus guards himself and rules his consciousness, who is immovably intent thereon in holy effort and is steadfast in self-culture, there arises a sensation of pleasure. Then he knows as follows:—

“In me has arisen this pleasurable sensation ; this has arisen from a cause, not without a cause. Where lies this cause? It lies in this body of mine. But this body of mine is impermanent, has become, or been formed, been produced by causes. A pleasurable sensation, the cause of which lies in the impermanent, originated, cause-produced body, how can it be permanent?” Thus, as well with regard

to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence, transitoriness, evanition, renunciation, cessation, resignation. While he commits himself to the contemplation of impermanence, etc., as well with regard to the body as to the pleasurable sensation, he desists from all yearning propensity based on the body and on pleasurable sensation.'

He who is not repelled by the tedious minuteness of this discursive style, will here find a view very important for the thought-fabric of Buddhism : the association of the impermanent and transitory with that which is produced by an operation of causality. Causality, or, to translate more accurately the Indian word, *paticcasamuppâda*, the origin of one thing in dependence from another thing, represents a relation existing between two members, of which the one, and because of it necessarily the other, is at no moment unaltered. There is no being subject to the law of causality, that does not resolve itself, when analysed, into a process of self-changing, of becoming. In the continuous oscilla-

tion, ruled by the natural law of causality, between being and not-being, consists alone the reality of the things which make up the contents of this world. 'This world, O Kaccâna,' as we read, 'generally proceeds on a duality, on the "it is" and the "it is not." But, O Kaccâna, whoever perceives in truth and wisdom how things originate in the world, in his eyes there is no "it is not" in this world. Whoever, Kaccâna, perceives in truth and wisdom how things pass away in this world, in his eyes there is no "it is" in this world. . . . Sorrow alone arises where anything arises; sorrow passes away where anything passes away. "Everything is," this is the one extreme, O Kaccâna. "Everything is not," this is the other extreme. The Perfect One, O Kaccâna, remaining far from both these extremes, proclaims the truth in the middle: "From ignorance come con-formations"'—and here follows the wording of the formula of causality. The world is the world's process, the formula of causality is the expression of this process of the world, or at least of that side of the process with which

alone man, bound in sorrow and seeking deliverance, has anything to do. The conviction of an absolute law, which rules the world's process expressed in this formula, deserves to be set out in bold relief as one of the most essential elements of the body of Buddhist thought.

Things or substances, in the sense of a something existing by itself, as we are accustomed to understand these words, cannot, according to all we have stated, be at all thought of by Buddhism. As the most general expression for those things, the mutual relation of which the formula of causality explains, the being of which, one might almost say, is their standing in that mutual relation, the language of the Buddhists has two terms: Dhamma and Sankhâra: we may give an approximate rendering of them by 'order' and 'formation.' Both designations are really synonymous; both include the idea that, not so much something ordered, as something formed, as rather a self-ordering, a self-forming, constitutes the subject-matter of the world; with both there is inseparably associated in the

feeling of the Buddhist the thought that every order must give place to another order, and every formation to another formation. Bodily as well as spiritual evolutions, all sensations, all perceptions, all conditions, everything that is—i.e. all that passes, is a Dhamma, a Sankhâra. While older speculation had confined all being to the Âtman, the great unchangeable 'I,' it was now laid down as a fundamental proposition: all Dhammas are 'not-I'; they are all transitory. Time after time the words uttered by the god Indra when Buddha entered Nirvâna recur in the sacred texts: 'Impermanent truly are the Sankhâras, liable to origination and decease; as they arose so they pass away; their disappearance is happiness.'

Some have expressed the difference between the Brahman and the Buddhist conceptions of the existence of things, as if, of the component parts which together form the idea of becoming, being and not-being, the former had laid hold of the idea of being only, and the latter of non-being only.

We prefer to avoid every expression which would make Buddhism regard non-being as the true substance of things, and to express ourselves thus. The speculation of the Brahmins apprehended being in all becoming, that of the Buddhists becoming in all apparent being. In the former case substance without causality, in the latter causality without substance.

Where the sources lie, from which this causality derives its sanction and its power, Buddhism does not ask. It is as little concerned whether the world was created by a god, or whether it was evolved by an absolute substance or by a creative natural 'sub-stratum' out of its own interior. He accepts its presence and the working of the law of the world as facts. Should anyone wish to express, though by no means in full accord with Buddhist habits of thought, what is the absolute within this domain of impermanence—we should, perhaps, rather say the most absolute—he might name as such the controlling law of the universe, that of causality. Where there is no being, but only becoming,

it is not a substance, but only a law, which can be recognised as the first and the last.

A beginning of time from which the working of this law takes effect, and a limit of space, which encloses the world in which it operates, cannot be discovered. Is there in fact no such limit? 'This has the Exalted One not revealed.' 'O disciples, think not such thoughts as the world thinks: "The world is everlasting, or the world is not everlasting. The world is finite, or the world is not finite." . . . If ye think, O disciples, thus think ye: "This is suffering"; thus think ye: "This is the origin of suffering"; thus think ye: "This is the extinction of suffering"; thus think ye: "This is the path to the extinction of suffering."'

THE SOUL

It is only now, in this connection, that we are in a position to thoroughly understand a much-talked-of dogma of Buddhism: the negation of soul.

It is not incorrect to say that Buddhism disaffirms the existence of soul, but this cannot

be understood in a sense which would in any way give this thought a materialistic stamp. It might be said with equal propriety that Buddhism denies the existence of the body. The body, as well as the soul, exists only as a complex of manifold interconnected origination and decease; but neither body nor soul has existence as a self-contained substance, sustaining itself 'per se.' Sensations, perceptions, and all those processes which make up the inner life, crowd upon one another in motley variety; in the centre of this changing plurality stands consciousness, which, if the body be compared to a state, may be spoken of as the ruler of this state. But consciousness is not essentially different from perceptions and sensations, the comings and goings of which it at the same time superintends and regulates: it is also a Sankhâra, and like all other Sankhâras it is changeable and without substance. We must here divest ourselves wholly of all customary modes of thinking. We are accustomed to realise our inner life as a comprehensible factor, only when we are allowed to refer its changing

ingredients, every individual feeling, every distinct act of the will, to one and an ever identical ego, but this mode of thinking is fundamentally opposed to Buddhism. Here as everywhere it condemns that fixity which we are prone to give to the current of incidents that come and go by conceiving a substance, to or in which they might happen. A seeing, a hearing, a conceiving, above all, a suffering, takes place: but an existence, which may be regarded as the seer, the hearer, the sufferer, is not recognised in Buddhist teaching.

It may be allowable in this place to go beyond the range of the sacred texts, and here insert those very clear expressions which we find on this group of problems in a later and in many respects exceedingly remarkable dialogue, the 'Questions of Milinda.' In the centuries which followed Alexander's invasion of India, which was so highly important an event in Indian history—in those times, the traces of which meet our eyes in the Greek coins struck in India, and the half-Hellenic figures of ancient Buddhist reliefs—there cannot but have been in the Indus territory

meetings of argumentative Greeks with Indian monks and dialecticians, and Buddhist literature has preserved one record of such encounters in that dialogue, which bears the name of the Yavana king Milinda—that is, the Ionian or Greek prince Menander.

King Milinda says to the great saint Nâgasena: 'How art thou known, venerable sire; what is thy name, sire?'

The saint replies: 'I am named Nâgasena, O great king; but Nâgasena, great king, is only a name, an appellation, a designation, an epithet, a mere word; here there is no subject.'

Then said the king Milinda: 'Well to be sure! let only the five hundred Yavanas and the eighty thousand monks hear it: this Nâgasena says: "Here there is no subject." Can anyone assent to this?'

And king Milinda went on to say to the venerable Nâgasena: If, O venerable Nâgasena, there is no subject, who is it then that provides you with what you need, clothes and food, lodging and medicine for the sick? Who is it that enjoys all these things? Who

walks in virtues? Who expends labour upon himself? Who attains the path and the fruits of holiness? Who attains Nirvâna? Who kills? Who steals? Who walks in pleasures? Who deceives? Who drinks? Who commits the five deadly sins? Thus there is then no good and no evil; there is no doer and no originator of good and evil actions; good action and evil action bring no reward and bear no fruit. If anyone were to kill thee, venerable Nâgasena, even he would commit no murder.

‘Sire, are the hairs Nâgasena?’

‘No, great king.’

‘Are nails or teeth, skin or flesh or bone Nâgasena?’

‘No, great king.’

‘Is the bodily form Nâgasena, O sire?’

‘No, great king.’

‘Are the sensations Nâgasena?’

‘No, great king.’

‘Are the perceptions, the conformations, the consciousness Nâgasena?’

‘No, great king.’

‘Or, sire, the combination of corporeal

form, sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, is this Nâgasena ?'

'No, great king.'

'Or, sire, apart from the corporeal form, and the sensations, the perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, is there a Nâgasena ?'

'No, great king.'

'Wherever I look then, sire, I nowhere find a Nâgasena. A mere word, sire, is Nâgasena. What is Nâgasena then ? Thou speakest false then, sire, and thou liest ; there is no Nâgasena.'

Then spoke the venerable Nâgasena to king Milinda thus : 'Thou art accustomed, great king, to all the comfort of a princely life, to the greatest comfort. If then, O great king, thou goest out on foot at midday on the hot earth, on the burning sand, and treadest on the sharp stones, gravel, and sand, thy feet are hurt ; thy body is fatigued, thy mind upset ; there arises a consciousness of a bodily condition associated with dislike. Hast thou come on foot or on a chariot ?'

'I do not travel on foot, sire : I have come on a chariot.'

‘If thou hast come on a chariot, great king, then define the chariot. Is the pole the chariot, great king?’

And now the saint turns the same course of reasoning against the king which the king himself had used against him. Neither the pole, nor the wheels, nor the body, nor the yoke is the chariot. The chariot, moreover, is not the combination of all these component parts, or anything else beyond them. ‘Wherever I look then, O great king, I nowhere find the chariot. A mere word, O king, is the chariot. What then is the chariot? Thou speakest false then, O king, and thou liest; there is no chariot. Thou art, O great king, suzerain of all India. Of whom, therefore, hast thou any dread, that thou speakest untruth? Well to be sure! let the five hundred Yavanas and the eighty thousand monks hear it. This king Milinda has said: “I have come here on a chariot.” Then I said, “If thou hast come on a chariot, O great king, then explain the chariot?” And he could not point out the chariot. Can anyone assent to this?’

When he spoke thus, the five hundred Yavanas shouted approval of the venerable Nâgasena, and said to king Milinda: 'Now, O great king, speak, if thou canst.'

But king Milinda said to the venerable Nâgasena:

'I do not speak untruly, venerable Nâgasena. In reference to pole, axle, wheels, body and bar, the name, the appellation, the designation, the epithet, the word "chariot" is used.'

'Good indeed, great king, thou knowest the chariot. And in the same way, O king, in reference to my hair, my skin and bones, to corporeal form, sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, the word Nâgasena is used: but here subject, in the strict sense of the word, there is none. Thus also, great king, has the nun Vajirâ explained in the presence of the Exalted One:

'"As in the case where the parts of a chariot come together the word 'chariot' is used, so also where the five groups are, there is a person; that is the common notion."

‘Well done, venerable Nâgasena! wonderful, Nâgasena! Many questionings indeed arose in my mind and thou hast resolved them. If Buddha were alive, he would applaud thee. Bravo! bravo! Nâgasena; many questionings arose in my mind and thou hast resolved them.’

We have selected for quotation this passage of the ‘Questions of Milinda,’ because it controverts the idea of a soul-substance more fully and clearly than is done in the canonical texts. But the old texts themselves virtually rest on the same ground and the dialogue does not omit to authenticate it, by expressly quoting the canonical books. Although the ‘Milindapañha’ was written apparently in the north-west of the Indian peninsula, and the sacred texts lie before us in the form in which they were preserved, and still are preserved, in the cloisters of Ceylon, nevertheless the words of the nun Vajirâ quoted in the dialogue are actually to be found in these texts. I have succeeded in finding them there, and the connection in which they occur is a guarantee that the conversation of the saint Nâgasena

and the Greek king Menander truly reflects the old Church teaching on the subject. Mâra, the tempter, who seeks to confuse men by error and heresy, appears before a nun and says to her: 'Thou art that by which personality is constituted, the creator of the person; the person that has an origin, that thou art; thou art the person that passes away.' She answers: 'What meanest thou, Mâra, that there is a person? False is thy teaching. This is only a heap of changeful conformations; here there is not a person. As in the case where the parts of a chariot come together the word "chariot" is used, so also where the five groups are, there is a person; that is the common notion. Pain alone it is that comes, pain that exists and that passes away; nothing else but pain arises, nothing else but pain vanishes again.'

Thought has smitten down the stony unvarying entity of Brahmanism; here it realises in full consciousness the ultimate consequences of its act: if it is the absolutely restless movement of things which creates suffering, it cannot be said any more, 'I suffer, thou sufferest';

there is left alone the certainty that there is suffering, or, better still, that suffering keeps on coming and going. For the stream of Sankhâras appearing and again vanishing admits no 'I' and no 'thou,' but only a phenomenon of the 'I' and 'thou,' which the many in their hallucination address with an appellation of personality.

Imagination, which in the service of inquiring thought seeks for types and symbols of formless ideas in the form-world of nature, has at all times when its object was to represent a being, the characteristic of which is movement, chosen with decided preference two images: the flowing stream of water and the self-consuming flame. In the dark sayings of Buddha's great contemporary, Heraklitos, who in his theory of the being of beings more nearly approaches Buddha than does any other Greek thinker, both comparisons are constantly recurring in the foreground: 'Everything flows on'; the universe is 'an ever-living fire.' The figurative language of Buddhism also employs both the stream and the flame as symbols of the restless move-

ment involved in every state of being. But in this the Buddhist figure differs from that of the Ephesian, that Buddhism, ignoring every metaphysical interest which has not its root in an ethical interest, does not in its view of the water and the flame contemplate the mere movement, the bare becoming only, but above all the to-human-life-so-momentous and destructive power of this movement, this becoming. There are four great currents which break in with destructive force upon the human world: the stream of desire, the stream of being, the stream of error, the stream of ignorance. 'The sea, the sea: thus, O disciples, saith a child of this world, who hath not received the Doctrine. But this, O disciples, is not that which is called the sea in the Doctrine of the Holy One; this is only a great mass of water, a great flood of water. The eye of man, O disciples, is the sea; things visible are the foam of this sea. He who hath overcome the foaming billows of visible things, of him, O disciples, it is said: That is a Brahman who hath in his inner man out-riden the sea of the eye, with its waves and

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whirlpools, with its depths profound and its prodigies ; he hath reached the shore ; he stands on firm earth.' The same follows regarding the sea of hearing and the other senses. 'Thus spake the Exalted One ; when the Perfect One had thus spoken, the Master went on to say :

“If thou this sea with its abyss of waters,
Full of waves, full of deeps, full of monsters,
Hast crossed, wisdom and holiness are thy
portion ;
The land hast thou, the goal of the universe
hast thou reached.”

But no other picture was so perfectly adapted for Buddhism to express the nature of being as the figure of flame, which, remaining in apparently restful invariability, is yet only a continuous self-production and self-consumption, and in which at the same time is embodied, with a still more impressive reality for the Indians than for us, the tormenting power of heat, the enemy of blissful coolness, the enemy of happiness and peace. 'As, where there is heat, coolness is also found, so also where there is the three-

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fold fire—the fire of love, hate, and infatuation—the extinction of the fire must be sought.’—‘Everything, O disciples, is in flames. And what everything is in flames? The eye is in flames, and so on. By what fire is it kindled? By the fire of desire, by the fire of hate, by the fire of fascination, it is kindled; by birth, old age, death, pain, lamentation, sorrow, grief, despair, it is kindled: thus I say.’—‘The whole world is in flames; the whole world is wrapped in smoke, the whole world is wasted by fire; the whole world quakes.’

But to us in this connection more important than the employment of the metaphor of fire, from an ethical point of view, is its introduction to illustrate the metaphysical nature of being as of a continuous process. It is reserved to later texts to work up this metaphor to perfect clearness; but it already exists in the sacred writings, although we feel how thought has here to struggle with expression. Beings resemble a flame; their state of being, their becoming re-born is a flaming cleaving of self, a feeding of self upon the

fuel which the world of impermanence supplies. As the flame, clinging to the wind, borne by the wind, inflames even distant things, so the flame-like existence of beings presses on in the moment of re-birth into far distances; here the being puts off the old body, there it clothes itself with a new body. As the wind carries on the flame, so the thirst which clings to being carries on the soul from one existence to another.

In the previously quoted dialogue 'The Questions of Milinda,' the conversation turns upon the problem of the identity or non-identity of the being in his several existences. The saint Nâgasena says: it is not the same being and yet they are not separate beings which relieve one another in the series of existences. 'Give an illustration,' says king Milinda. 'If a man were to light a light, O great king, would it not burn on through the night?'—'Yes, sire, it would burn through the night.'—'How then, O great king, is the flame in the first watch of the night identical with the flame in the midnight watch?'—'No, sire.'—'And the flame in the midnight watch, is

it identical with the flame in the last watch of the night?'—'No, sire.'—'But how then, O great king, was the light in the first watch of the night another, in the midnight watch another, and in the last watch of the night another?'—'No, sire, it has burned all night long feeding on the same fuel.'—'So also, O great king, the chain of elements of being completes itself: the one comes, the other goes. Without beginning, without end, the circle completes itself: therefore it is neither the same being nor another being, which presents itself last to the consciousness.'

Being is, we may say, the procession—regulated by the law of causality—of continuous being at every moment self-consuming and anew begetting. What we term a souled being, is one individual member in the line of this procession, one flame in this sea of flame. As in consuming, the flame is always seeking fresh fuel for itself, so also this continuity of perception, sensation, action and suffering, which seems to the deluded gaze, deceived by the appearance of unbroken invariability, to be a being, a subject, maintains

itself in the general influx and evanescence of ever fresh elements from the domain of the objective world.

THE SAINT—THE EGO—THE NIRVÂNA

SITTING under the tree of knowledge Buddha says to himself: 'Difficult will it be for men to grasp the law of causality, the chain of causes and effects. And this also will be very hard for them to grasp, the coming of all conformations to an end, the loosening from everything earthly, the extinction of desire, the cessation of longing, the end, the Nirvâna.' These words divide the circle, which Buddhist thought describes, into its two natural halves. On the one side the earthly world, ruled by the law of causality. On the other side—is it the eternal? Is it the Nothing? We may doubt. We know this much only to begin with, that it is the domain over which the law of causality has no power.

Our sketch will follow this clearly indicated division.

From the flames of becoming, decease, and

suffering, the believer, he who has knowledge, saves himself in the world of 'extinction' in the cool quiet of everlasting peace. He overcomes ignorance and thereby sets himself free from the painful fruits which are bound up with it through the natural necessity of the law of causality. He knows the four sacred truths, and 'while he thus knows and apprehends, his soul is freed from the calamity of desire, freed from the calamity of becoming, freed from the calamity of error, freed from the calamity of ignorance. In the delivered there arises the knowledge of his deliverance; ended is re-birth, fulfilled the law, duty done, there is no more any returning to this world: this he knows.'

Buddha's disciple hopes to attain this happiness not merely in the hereafter. He who has conquered ignorance and got rid of desire enjoys the supreme reward already in this life. His outer man may still be detained in the world of suffering; he knows that it is not he himself whom the coming and going of the Sankhâras affects. Buddhist proverbial philosophy attributes in innumerable passages

the possession of Nirvâna to the saint, who still treads the earth :

‘The disciple who has put off lust and desire, rich in wisdom, has here on earth attained the deliverance from death, the rest, the Nirvâna, the eternal state.’

‘He who has escaped from the trackless, hard mazes of the Sansâra, who has crossed over and reached the shore, self-absorbed, without stumbling and without doubt, who has delivered himself from the earthly, and attained Nirvâna, him I call a true Brahman.’

It is not an anticipation in parlance, but it is the absolutely exact expression of the dogmatic thought, when not merely the hereafter, which awaits the emancipated saint, but the perfection which he already attains in this life, is called the Nirvâna. What is to be extinguished has been extinguished, the fire of lust, hatred, bewilderment. In unsubstantial distance lie hope and fear; the will, the hugging of the hallucination of egoity is subdued, as a man throws aside the foolish wishes of childhood. What matters it whether the transitory state of being, the root of which is

nipped, lay aside its indifferent phenomenal life instantaneously or in after ages?

If the saint will even now put an end to his state of being he can do so, but the majority stand fast until nature has reached her goal: of such may those words be said which are put in the mouth of the most prominent of Buddha's disciples: 'I long not for death, I long not for life; I wait till mine hour come, like a servant who awaiteth his reward. I long not for death, I long not for life; I wait till mine hour come, alert and with watchful mind.'

If we are to indicate the precise point at which the goal is reached for the Buddhist, we must not look to the entry of the dying Perfect One into the range of the everlasting—be this either everlasting being or everlasting nothing—but to that moment of his earthly life, when he has attained the status of sinlessness and painlessness; this is the true Nirvâna. If the Buddhist faith really make the saint's state of being disembodied itself into nothingness—we shall come directly to the question whether it does so—still entry

into nothingness for nothingness' sake is not at all the object of aspiration which has been set before the Buddhist. The goal to which he pressed was, we must constantly repeat this, solely deliverance from the sorrowful world of origination and decease. Religious aspiration did not purposely and expressly demand that this deliverance should transport to nothingness, but when this was taught at all expression was merely given thereby to the indifferent accidental consequences of metaphysical reflections, which prevent the assumption of an everlasting, immutable, happy existence. In the religious life, in the tone which prevailed in the ancient Buddhist order, the thought of an annihilation has had no influence. 'As the great sea, O disciples, is permeated by but one taste, the taste of salt, so also, O disciples, this Doctrine and this Law are pervaded by but one taste, the taste of deliverance.'

Our speculations must not seek to discover what is the essence of a faith; we must permit the adherents of each faith themselves to determine this, and it is for historical inquiry

to point out how they have defined it. If anyone describes Buddhism as a religion of annihilation, and attempts to develop it therefrom as from its specific germ, he has, in fact, succeeded in wholly missing the main drift of Buddha and the ancient order of his disciples.

Has the saint attained the goal of his earthly life, then is true of him what an old text says of Buddha: 'The body of the Perfect One, O disciples, subsists, cut off from the stream of becoming. As long as his body subsists, so long will gods and men see him: if his body be dissolved, his life run out, gods and men shall no more behold him.' While in the case of beings who are committed to the path of metempsychosis, consciousness, escaping from the dying, becomes the germ of a new state of being, the consciousness of the dying saint is extinguished without residuum. 'Dissolved is the body,' says Buddha, when one of the disciples has entered into Nirvâna, 'extinct is perception; the sensations have all vanished away. The conformations have found their

repose: the consciousness has sunk to its rest.'

When the venerable Godhika has brought about his own death by opening a vein, the disciples see a dark cloud of smoke moving to and fro on all sides round his corpse. They ask Buddha what the smoke means. 'That is Mâra, the wicked one, O disciples,' says Buddha: 'he is looking for the noble Godhika's consciousness: "where has the noble Godhika's consciousness found its place?" But the noble Godhika has entered into Nirvâna; his consciousness nowhere remains.'

Does this end of the earthly existence imply at the same time the total cessation of being? Is it the Nothing which receives the dying Perfect One into its dominion?

Step by step we have prepared the ground so as now to be able to face this question.

Some have thought to find the answer to this question contained in the word Nirvâna itself—i.e. 'Extinction.' It seemed the most obvious construction that extinction is an

extinction of being in the Nothing. But doubts were soon expressed as to the propriety of so summary a disposal of this question. It was quite allowable to speak of an extinction in the case—and the term was most incontrovertibly used by the Indians in the case—where being was not annihilated, but where it, freed from the glowing heat of suffering, had found the path to the cool repose of painless happiness. Max Müller has above all others maintained with warm eloquence the notion of Nirvâna as the completion but not as an extinction of being. His position is, that although later Buddhist metaphysicians have undoubtedly regarded the Nothing as the supreme object of all effort, yet the original teaching of Buddha and the ancient order of his disciples was different: for them the Nirvâna was nothing more than the entry of the spirit upon its rest, an eternal beatitude, which is as highly exalted above the joys, as it is above the sorrow of the transitory world. Would not, asks Max Müller, a religion, which lands us at last in the Nothing, cease to be a religion? It



would no longer be what every religion ought to be and purports to be, a bridge from the temporal to the eternal, but it would be a delusive gangway, which suddenly breaks off and shoots a man, just when he fancies he has reached the goal of the eternal, into the abyss of annihilation.

We cannot follow the famous inquirer, when he attempts to trace the limits between the possible and the impossible in the development of religion. In the sultry dreamy stillness of India, thoughts spring and grow, every surmise and every sensation grows, otherwise than in the cool air of the west. Perhaps what is here beyond comprehension may there be comprehensible, and if we reach a point which is to us a limit of the comprehensible, we shall permit much to pass and stand as incomprehensible, and await the future, which may bring us nearer the solution of the enigma.

Max Müller's researches, which could under the then circumstances of the case be based on only a portion of the authentic texts bearing on this branch of the subject, did not

fail to attract the attention of native literati in Ceylon, the country which has preserved to the present day Buddhist temperament and knowledge in its purest form. And by the joint labours of eminent Singhalese students of Buddhist literature, such as the late James d'Alwis, and European inquirers, among whom we may mention especially Childers, Rhys Davids, and Trenckner, literary materials for the elucidation of the dogma of Nirvâna have been amply unearthed and ably treated. I have endeavoured to complete the collections, for which we have to thank these learned scholars, in that I have submitted all the testimony of the sacred Pâli canon, that contained in the discourses of Buddha as well as that in the writings upon the rights of the Order, to a detailed examination, so that I believe I am in a position to hope that no essential expression of the ancient dogmatics and doctrinal poets has been omitted. Before I undertook this task, it was my conviction that there is in the ancient Buddhist literature no passage which directly decides the alternative whether the Nirvâna is eternal.

felicity or annihilation. So much the greater therefore was my surprise, when in the course of these researches I lit not upon one passage, but upon very numerous passages, which speak as expressly as possible upon the point, regarding which the controversy is waged, and determine it with a clearness which leaves nothing to be desired. And it was no less a cause of astonishment to me when I found that in that alternative, which appeared to have been laid down with all possible cogency—viz. that the Nirvâna must have been understood in the ancient Order to be either the Nothing or a supreme felicity, there was finally neither on the one side nor on the other perfect accuracy.

We shall now endeavour to state the question as it must have presented itself to Buddhist dogmatic on its own premises, and then the answer which the question has received.

A doctrine which contemplates a future of eternal perfection behind transitory being, cannot possibly admit of the kingdom of the eternal first beginning only at the point

where the world of the transient ends, cannot conjure it up immediately, as it were out of the Nothing. In the kingdom of the transient itself there must be contained, veiled perhaps like a latent germ, but still present, an element which bears in itself the pledge of everlasting being stretching out beyond origination and decease. It is possible that, where the claims of strict dialectic sequence are opposed by motives of another kind, thought pauses before accepting this so obvious conclusion; but it is important before we examine these deviations from the logical consequence, which we may possibly expect to find, to obtain a view of the form in which the logical consequence must have presented itself to Buddhist thought.

The finite world appears in the dogmatic of Buddhism to rest wholly upon itself. Whatever we see, whatever we hear, our senses as well as the objects which are presented to them, everything is drawn within the cycle of origination and decease; everything is only a Dhamma, a Sankhâra, and all Dhammas, all Sankhâras are transitory. Whence this

cycle? No matter whence; it is there from a past beyond ken. The existence of the conditional is accepted as a given fact; thought shrinks from going back to the unconditional.

This is specially evident in the question as to the soul, the personality. 'This is only a heap of Sankhâras; here there is not a person.'

We see: the finite world bears in itself no traces which point to its connection with a world of the eternal. How could it possibly be otherwise? Where the opposition of the transient and eternal is carried to the point which Indian thought has here reached, there can, in fact, be no union conceived between the two extremes. Had the eternal any share whatsoever in the occurrences of the world of the changeable, a shadow of the changeable would fall on its own unchangeability. The conditional can only be thought of as conditioned through another conditional. If we follow the dialectic consequence solely, it is impossible on the basis of this theory of life to conceive how, where a series of conditions

has run out, annihilating itself, anything else is to be recognised as remaining but a vacuum.

This is the consequence. Does Buddhism actually admit this?

We must here insert a few remarks upon the standard technical terms, which our texts are wont to use in dealing with these questions.

The word which we have translated 'Person,' in the passages quoted, is not the precise technical term which the Brahmanical speculation, discussed by us at an earlier stage, had coined as the most exact and special expression for the eternal in man: *Âtman*, 'the self,' 'the ego.' The Buddhist texts deal with the *Âtman* also. If the demands of dialectic alone be regarded, it cannot be understood how the question regarding the 'ego' was to be answered otherwise than the question as to the 'person'—it seems clear enough that both words are only different names for the same idea, and that he who denies the existence of the 'person,' cannot maintain the existence of the 'ego' or even admit it possible.

Beside the expression Âtman, we place another, of which the same may be said, the name Tathâgata, 'the Perfect One.' Buddha is in the habit of calling himself Tathâgata in his Buddhahood. If a question be raised as to the essentiality and everlasting continuance of the Tathâgata, this is altogether parallel to the question regarding the essentiality and continuance of the ego; if there be an ego, the sacred perfect personality of the Tathâgata must undoubtedly be the ego, which deserves this name in the highest sense, which bears in itself the greatest claim to everlasting being. But, as we might expect, with the lot of the 'person,' the lot of the Tathâgata, as well as that of the ego, is cast.

Let us see whether the expressions of the Buddhist texts are in accordance with this view.

'Then the wandering monk Vacchagotta went to where the Exalted One was staying. When he had come near him, he saluted him. When, saluting him, he had interchanged friendly words with him, he sat down beside

him. Sitting beside him the wandering monk Vacchagotta spake to the Exalted One, saying: 'How does the matter stand, venerable Gotama, is there the ego?'

When he said this, the Exalted One was silent.

'How then, venerable Gotama, is there not the ego?'

And still the Exalted One maintained silence. Then the wandering monk Vacchagotta rose from his seat and went away.

But the venerable Ânanda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta had gone to a distance, soon said to the Exalted One: 'wherefore, sire, has the Exalted One not given an answer to the questions put by the wandering monk Vacchagotta?'

'If I, Ânanda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta asked me: "Is there the ego?" had answered: "the ego is," then that, Ânanda, would have confirmed the doctrine of the Samanas and Brahmanas who believe in permanence. If I, Ânanda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta asked me: "is there not the ego?" had answered: "the ego is not,"

then that, Ânanda, would have confirmed the doctrine of the Samanas and Brahmanas, who believe in annihilation. If I, Ânanda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta asked me: "is there the ego?" had answered: "the ego is," would that have served my end, Ânanda, by producing in him the knowledge: all existences are non-ego?'

'That it would not, sire.'

'But if I, Ânanda, when the wandering monk Vacchagotta asked me: "Is there not the ego?" had answered: "The ego is not," then that, Ânanda, would only have caused the wandering monk Vacchagotta to be thrown from one bewilderment into another: "My ego, did it not exist before? but now it exists no longer!"'

We see: the person who has framed this dialogue, has in his thought very nearly approached the consequence, which leads to the negation of the ego. It may almost be said, that, though probably he did not wish to express this consequence with overt consciousness, yet he has in fact expressed it. If Buddha avoids the negation of the exist-

ence of the ego, he does so in order not to shock a weak-minded hearer. Through the shirking of the question as to the existence or non-existence of the ego, is heard the answer, to which the premises of the Buddhist teaching tended: The ego is not. Or, what is equivalent: The Nirvâna is annihilation.

But we can well understand why these thinkers, who were in a position to realise this ultimate consequence and to bear it, abandoned the erection of it as an official dogma of the Buddhist order. There were enough, and more than enough, of hopes and wishes, from which he who desired to follow the Sakya's son, had to sever his heart. Why present to the weak the keen edge of the truth: the victor's prize of the delivered is the Nothing? True, it is not permissible to put falsehood in the place of truth, but it is allowable to draw a well-meant veil over the picture of the truth, the sight of which threatens the destruction of the unprepared. What harm did it do? That which was alone of intrinsic worth and essential to excite the struggle for deliverance was maintained in un-

impaired force, the certainty that deliverance is to be found only where joys and sorrows of this world have ceased. Was the emancipation of him, who knew how to free himself from everything transitory, not perfect enough? Would it become more perfect, if he were driven to acknowledge that beside the transitory there is only the Nothing?

Therefore the official teaching of the Church represented that on the question, whether the ego is, whether the perfected saint lives after death or not, the exalted Buddha has taught nothing.

From the texts, in which this shirking of the question is inculcated, the following epitomised dialogue may be given.

The venerable Mâlukya comes to the Master, and expresses his astonishment that the Master's discourse leaves a series of the very most important and deepest questions unanswered. Is the world eternal or is it limited by bounds of time? Does the perfect Buddha live on beyond death? Does the Perfect One not live on beyond death? It pleases me not, says that monk, that all

this should remain unanswered, and I do not think it right; therefore I am come to the Master to interrogate him about these doubts. May it please Buddha to answer them if he can. 'But when anyone does not understand a matter and does not know it, then a straightforward man says: I do not understand that, I do not know that.'

We see: the question of the Nirvâna is brought before Buddha by that monk as directly and definitely as could ever be possible. And what answers Buddha? He says in his Socratic fashion, not without a touch of irony:

'What have I said to thee before now, Mâlukyaputta? Have I said: Come, Mâlukyaputta, and be my disciple; I shall teach thee, whether the world is everlasting or not everlasting, whether the world is finite or infinite, whether the vital faculty is identical with the body or separate from it, whether the Perfect One lives on after death or does not live on, or whether the Perfect One lives on and at the same time does not live on after death, or whether he neither lives on nor does not live on?'

‘That thou hast not said, sire.’

Or hast thou, Buddha goes on, said to me : I shall be thy disciple, declare unto me, whether the world is everlasting or not everlasting, and so on ?

This also must Mâlukya answer in the negative.

If a man, Buddha proceeds, were struck by a poisoned arrow, and his friends and relatives called in a skilful physician : what if the wounded man said : ‘I shall not allow my wound to be treated until I know who the man is by whom I have been wounded, whether he is a noble, a Brahman, a Vaiçya, or Çûdra’—or if he said : ‘I shall not allow my wound to be treated, until I know what they call the man who has wounded me, and of what family he is, whether he is tall, or small, or of middle stature, and how his weapon was made, with which he has struck me.’ What would the end of the case be ? The man would die of his wound.

Why has Buddha not taught his disciples, whether the world is finite or infinite, whether the saint lives on beyond death or not ? Be-

cause the knowledge of these things does not conduce to progress in holiness, because it does not contribute to peace and enlightenment. What contributes to peace and enlightenment, Buddha has taught his own: the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering, the truth of the path to the cessation of suffering. 'Therefore, Mâlukyaputta, whatsoever has not been revealed by me, let that remain unrevealed, and what has been revealed, let it be revealed.'

Our researches must accept this clear and decisive solution of the question, recurring often in the sacred texts, as it is given: it needs no interpretation, and admits of no strained construction. Orthodox teaching in the ancient order of Buddhists inculcated expressly on its converts to forego the knowledge of the being or non-being of the perfected saint.

But, besides the question as to what was recognised as the orthodox dogma, there is yet another which we have to take up. Who would believe that he has fathomed the faith

respects to her, and inquired of her concerning the sacred doctrine.

‘Venerable lady,’ asked the king, ‘does the Perfect One exist after death?’

‘The Exalted One, O great king, has not declared: the Perfect One exists after death.’

‘Then does the Perfect One not exist after death, venerable lady?’

‘This also, O great king, the Exalted One has not declared: the Perfect One does not exist after death.’

‘Thus, venerable lady, the Perfect One does exist after death, and at the same time does not exist after death?—thus, venerable lady, the Perfect One neither exists after death, nor does he not exist?’

The answer is still the same: the Perfect One has not revealed it. We see how great pains are taken, with that somewhat clumsy subtlety which is characteristic of thought at every step in this stage of development, not merely to exhaust the two alternatives immediately confronting each other, but in the most careful manner to close up all joinings and loopholes, by which the true facts of the

case might escape being caught in the logical net. But it is in vain; the Exalted One has not revealed this.

The king is astonished. 'What is the reason, venerable lady, what is the ground, on which the Exalted One has not revealed this?'

'Permit me,' answers the nun, 'now to ask thee a question, O great king, and do thou answer me as the case seems to thee to stand. How thinkest thou, O great king, hast thou an accountant, or a mint-master, or a treasurer, who could count the sands of the Ganges, who could say: there are there so many grains of sand, or so many hundreds, or thousands, or hundreds of thousands of grains of sand?'

'No, venerable lady, I have not.'

'Or hast thou an accountant, a mint-master, or a treasurer, who could measure the water in the great ocean, who could say: there are therein so many measures of water, or so many hundreds or thousands, or hundreds of thousands of measures of water?'

'No, venerable lady, I have not.'

'And why not? The great ocean is deep,

immeasurable, unfathomable. So also, O great king, if the existence of the Perfect One be measured by the predicates of corporeal form : these predicates of the corporeal form are abolished in the Perfect One, their root is severed, they are hewn away like a palm-tree, and laid aside, so that they cannot germinate again in the future. Released, O great king, is the Perfect One from this, that his being should be gauged by the measure of the corporeal world : he is deep, immeasurable, unfathomable as the great ocean. "The Perfect One exists after death," this is not apposite ; "the Perfect One does not exist after death," this also is not apposite ; "the Perfect One at once exists and does not exist after death," this also is not apposite ; "the Perfect One neither does nor does not exist after death," this also is not apposite.'

'But Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, received the nun Khemâ's discourse with satisfaction and approbation, rose from his seat, bowed reverently before Khemâ the nun, turned and went away.'

We shall scarcely be astray in supposing

that we discover in this dialogue a marked departure from the sharply-defined line to which the course of thought confines itself in the previously quoted conversation between Buddha and Mâlukya. True, the question as to the eternal duration of the Perfect One is as little answered here as there, but why can it not be answered? The Perfect One's existence is unfathomably deep, like the ocean: it is of a depth which terrestrial human thought with the appliances at its command, cannot exhaust. The man who applies to the strictly unconditional predicates such as being and non-being, which are used properly enough of the finite, the conditional, resembles a person who attempts to count the sands of the Ganges or the drops of the ocean.

When such a reason is assigned for the waiving of the question as to whether the Perfect One lives for ever, is not this very giving of a reason itself an answer? And is not this answer a Yes? No being in the ordinary sense, but still assuredly not a non-being: a sublime positive, of which thought

has no idea, for which language has no expression, which beams out to meet the cravings of the thirsty for immortality in that same splendour, of which the apostle says: 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'

We here proceed to insert another passage, which adopts a position on this question similar to that last quoted.

'At this time a monk named Yamaka had adopted the following heretical notion :—"I understand the doctrine taught by the Exalted One to be this, that a monk who is free from sin, when his body dissolves, is subject to annihilation, that he passes away, that he does not exist beyond death."'

Whoever names the absolute Nothing as the goal, in which, according to the Buddhist creed, the life of the Perfect One ends, may learn from the opening words of this passage, that the monk Yamaka advocated this very interpretation, and that he had thereby been guilty of heresy.

The venerable Sâriputta undertakes to instruct him.

‘How thinkest thou, friend Yamaka, is the Perfect One identical with the corporeal form—i.e. does Buddha’s body represent his true ego? Dost thou hold this?’

‘I do not, my friend.’

‘Is the Perfect One identical with the sensations? the perceptions? the conformations, the consciousness? Dost thou hold this?’

‘I do not, my friend.’

‘How thinkest thou, friend Yamaka, is the Perfect One comprised in the corporeal form . . . the sensations, and so on? Dost thou hold this?’

‘I do not, my friend.’

‘Is the Perfect One separate from the corporeal form? Dost thou hold this?’

‘I do not, my friend.’

‘How thinkest thou, friend Yamaka, are the corporeal form, sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness, in their aggregate, the Perfect One? Dost thou hold this?’

'I do not, my friend.'

'How thinkest thou, friend Yamaka, is the Perfect One separate from corporeal form, sensations, perceptions, conformations, and consciousness? Dost thou hold this?'

'I do not, my friend.'

'Thus then, friend Yamaka, even here in this world the Perfect One is not to be apprehended by thee in truth. Hast thou therefore a right to speak, saying, "I understand the doctrine taught by the Exalted One to be this, that a monk who is free from sin, when his body dissolves, is subject to annihilation, that he passes away, that he does not exist beyond death"?''

'Such, indeed, was hitherto, friend Sâriputta, the heretical view which I ignorantly entertained. But now when I hear the venerable Sâriputta expound the doctrine, the heretical view has lost its hold of me, and I have learned the doctrine.'

Thus are all attempts to define dialectically the ego of the Perfect One repelled. The idea is certainly not that some other attempt might prove successful, but is kept in con-

cealment by Sâriputta; no more does the unavailingness of all these attempts to find a solution imply that the Perfect One does not exist at all. Thought, Sâriputta means to say, has here reached an unfathomably deep mystery, on the solution of which it must not insist. The monk, who seeks the happiness of his soul, has something else to pursue.

One who clearly and indefinitely renounced an everlasting future would speak in another strain; behind the veil of the mystery there flies the longing for escape from opposing reason, which declines to admit the conceivableness of everlasting existence, the hope for an existence, which is beyond reason and conception.

The terms, which can be applied to such an existence, are obviously exclusively negative. 'There is, O disciples, a state, where there is neither earth nor water, neither light nor air, neither infinity of space, nor infinity of reason, nor absolute void, nor the co-extinction of perception and non-perception, neither this world nor that world, both sun

and moon. That, O disciples, I term neither coming nor going nor standing, neither death nor birth. It is without basis, without procession, without cessation: that is the end of sorrow.' 'There is, O disciples, an unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed. Were there not, O disciples, this unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, there would be no possible exit from the world of the born, originated, created, formed.'

These words seem to sound as if we heard Brahmanical philosophers talking of the Brahma, the unborn intransient which is neither great nor small, the name of which is 'No, No,' for no word can exhaust its being. Yet these expressions, when viewed in the connection of Buddhist thought, convey something wholly different. To the Brahman the uncreated is so veritable a reality, that the reality of the created pales before it; the created derives its being and life solely from the uncreated. For the Buddhist the words 'there is an uncreated' merely signify that the created can free himself from the curse of being created—there is a path from the

world of the created out into dark endlessness. Does the path lead into a new existence? Does it lead into the Nothing? The Buddhist creed rests in delicate equipoise between the two. The longing of the heart that craves the eternal has not nothing, and yet the thought has not a something, which it might firmly grasp. Farther off the idea of the endless, the eternal could not withdraw itself from belief than it has done here, where, like a gentle flutter on the point of merging in the Nothing, it threatens to evade the gaze.

I close with a few sentences from the collections of aphorisms of ancient Buddhist literature. These aphorisms may add nothing new to what has been said, but they will show more clearly than all abstract treatment, what melodies were awakened in the circle of that ancient monastic order, when the cord of the Nirvâna was touched.

‘Plunged into meditation, the immovable ones who valiantly struggle evermore, the wise, grasp the Nirvâna, the gain which no other gain surpasses.’

‘Hunger is the most grievous illness; the

Sankhâra are the most grievous sorrow ; recognising this of a truth man attains the Nirvâna, the supreme happiness.'

'The wise, who cause no suffering to any being, who keep their body in check, they walk to the everlasting state : he who has reached that, knows no sorrow.'

'He who is permeated by goodness, the monk who adheres to Buddha's teaching, let him turn to the land of peace, where transiency finds an end, to happiness.'

DUTIES TO OTHERS

FOLLOWING the course which the rule of faith—i.e. the four sacred truths—marks out for us, we have delineated, as corresponding with the second and third of these tenets, what may be described as the metaphysic of Buddhism : the picture of the world bound in the chain of causality, of the sorrow-fraught present, and the picture of the hereafter, in which origination and decease have come to a pause, the flame of sorrow has been extinguished. The fourth tenet of the sacred truths teaches us to know the path which

leads out of that world into the domain of deliverance; the group of thoughts which it covers, may be termed the ethic of Buddhism.

‘This, O monks,’ so runs this tenet, ‘is the sacred truth of the path to the extinction of suffering: it is this sacred, eightfold path, to wit: Right Faith, Right Resolve, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Living, Right Effort, Right Thought, Right Self-concentration.’

The ideas here placed before us gather significance and colour from the many discourses of Buddha, in which the path of salvation leading to deliverance is described. That scholastic apparatus, from which Indian thought can never shake itself wholly free, is employed in no sparing manner. Everything has its established ever-recurring expression. Virtues and vices have their number: there is a fourfold onward effort; there are five powers and five organs of moral life. Heretics and unbelievers also know the five impediments and the seven elements of illumination, but Buddha’s disciples alone know, how that cinq becomes a dix, and this seven a fourteen.

More valuable than this scholastic, as an

aid to understanding how the moral presented itself to the Buddhist view, are the beautiful utterances of the poetical collections, as well as fables and parables, above all the ideal form of Buddha himself as the religious fancy of his disciples has sketched him. Not only in his final stage of earthly existence, but in hundreds of preceding existences has he unintermittingly arrived at all those perfections which were bringing him nearer and nearer to the supreme Buddhahood, and has in numberless displays of invincible strength of will and devoted self-sacrifice created an example for his believers. The components, which go to make up this ethical ideal, obviously disclose at every step the monastic character of Buddhist morality. The true holy life, is the life of the monk; the worldly life is an imperfect, necessarily unsatisfying life, the preliminary step of the weak. The primary demand made upon the monk is not: thou shalt live in this world and make this world a something which is worthy of life—but it is: thou shalt separate thyself from this world.

It is hardly necessary to say that any attempt to deduce from these enumerations of moral notions and sayings and narrations a connected code of morals, would be not less opposed to scientific truth than to scientific taste. Still, we find in the sacred texts expressions which point to a definite path of thought traversing the wide range of moral action and passion, a distribution of all that tends to happiness and deliverance under certain leading heads. Above all there recur continually three categories, to some extent like the headings of three chapters on ethic: uprightness, self-concentration, and wisdom. In the narrative of Buddha's last addresses, the discourse in which he places before his followers the doctrine of the path of salvation, is time after time couched in the following words:—'This is uprightness. This is self-concentration. This is wisdom. Pervaded by uprightness, self-concentration is fruitful and rich in blessing; pervaded by self-concentration, wisdom is fruitful and rich in blessing; pervaded by wisdom, the soul becomes wholly free from all infirmity, from the

infirmity of desire, from the infirmity of becoming, from the infirmity of error, from the infirmity of ignorance.' These three ranges of moral living are compared to the stages of a journey: the end of the journey is deliverance. The base of all is uprightness of walk, but inversely outward righteousness receives its finish only through wisdom. 'As hand washes hand and foot washes foot, so uprightness is purified by wisdom, and wisdom is purified by uprightness. Where there is uprightness, there is wisdom: where there is wisdom, there is uprightness. And the wisdom of the upright and the uprightness of the wise, have of all uprightness and wisdom in the world the highest value.'

The will of a supreme lawgiver and ruler in the realm of the moral world, as the ground on which the fact and force of a moral command rest, is no more a factor of Buddhist thought than any bold claim, based on inherent necessity, of the universal, that the individual should be subordinate thereto. Nay more, the decided advantage of moral action over immoral arises wholly and solely

from the consequence to the actor himself, which is naturally and necessarily attached to the one course of action or the other. In the one case reward—in the other punishment. 'He who speaks or acts with impure thoughts, him sorrow follows, as the wheel follows the foot of the draught horse. He who speaks or acts with pure thought, him joy follows, like his shadow, which does not leave him.' 'A peasant who saw a fruitful field and scattered no seed there, would not look for a crop. Even so I, who desire the reward of good works, if I saw a fine field for action and did not do good, should not expect the reward of works.' Thus morality has its sole weight in this, that it is the means to an end, in the lower degree the means to the humble end of happy life here on earth and in the forms of being yet to come, in the higher degree the means to the supreme and absolute end of happy deliverance.

We now pause in the next place to consider the requirement which Buddhism makes the precursor and preliminary of all higher moral perfection, the precept of 'uprightness,'

and we find its purport expressed in a series of uniformly negative propositions. Upright is he, who keeps himself from all impurity in word and deed. In the different series of prohibitions, into which this precept is analysed in the sacred texts, a complex of five commandments takes a special place in the foreground, the regular observance of which constitutes the 'fivefold uprightness.' Their substance is :

1. To kill no living thing ;
2. Not to lay hands on another's property ;
3. Not to touch another's wife ;
4. Not to speak what is untrue ;
5. Not to drink intoxicating drinks.

For monks the injunction of absolute chastity was inserted instead of the third of these propositions, and there is added for them a long series of further prohibitions in which abstinence from worldly comforts and enjoyments, from all worldly intermeddling as well as self-indulgence, is laid down as their duty. In the detailed expositions, which we find appended to the several prohibitions, the limits of the pure negative are not un-

frequently transgressed. It could not but happen that, whether the fundamental principle of Buddhist ethic admitted of morality being conceived as a positively constituted power or not, the 'thou shalt not' should gradually transform itself for the lively moral consciousness into 'thou shalt.' In this way we find the first of these prohibitions, that of killing, construed in a manner which scarcely falls short of the Christian version of that command, which 'was said by them of old time: thou shalt not kill.' 'How does a monk become a partaker of uprightness?' asks Buddha, and then proceeds himself to furnish the answer in the following sentences:—'A monk abstains from killing living creatures; he refrains from causing the death of living creatures. He lays down the stick; he lays down weapons. He is compassionate and tender-hearted: he seeks with friendly spirit the welfare of all living things. That is part of his uprightness.' From the prohibition of backbiting a positive course is deduced in the same speech of Buddha's in the following way:—'He abstains from calum-



nious conversation; he refrains from calumnious conversation. What he has heard here he does not repeat there, to separate this man from that; what he has heard there he does not repeat here, to separate that man from this. He is the uniter of the separated, and the confirmer of the united. He enjoys concord; he seeks to promote concord; he takes delight in concord; he is a speaker of concord-producing words. This also is a part of his uprightness.'

In every case it is quite true that the prohibition is far more comprehensive than the command; the range of the command goes in but few cases beyond what is of itself implied in the gentle influence which good men exercise by their mere presence without action. As it is peculiarly characteristic of woman's nature to diffuse such an influence silently around her, we shall perhaps be justified in attributing a trace of the feminine to that type of morality to which Buddhism has given birth.

Some who have endeavoured to bring Buddhism up to Christianity, have given com-

passionate love of all creatures as the kernel of the Buddhist's pure morality. In this there is something of truth. But the inherent difference of the two moral powers is still apparent. The language of Buddhism has no word for the poesy of Christian love, of which that hymn of Paul's is full, the love which is greater than faith and hope, without which one, though he spake with the tongue of men or of angels, would be a sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal; nor have the realities, in which that poetry assumed flesh and blood within the Christian world, had their parallel in the history of Buddhism. We may say that love, such as it displays itself in Buddhist morality, oscillating between negative and positive, approaches Christian love without actually touching it, in a way similar to that in which the beatitude of the Nirvâna, though fundamentally wholly different from the Christian idea of happiness, does to a certain extent, as we saw, swing towards it. Buddhism does not so much enjoin on one to love his enemy, as not to hate his enemy; it evokes and cherishes the emotion of friendly good-

ness and tender-heartedness towards all creatures, a feeling in which the motive power is not the groundless enigmatic self-surrender of love, but rather intelligent reflection, the conviction that it is thus best for all, and not least the expectation, that the natural law of retribution will allot to such conduct the richest reward.

‘He who keeps the angry passion,’ thus we read in the Dhammapada, ‘within his control, like a rolling waggon, him I call the real waggon-driver; any other is only a rein-holder.’ ‘Let a man overcome anger by not becoming angry: let a man overcome evil with good; let a man overcome the parsimonious by generosity, let a man overcome the liar with truth.’ “He has abused me, he has struck me, he has oppressed me, he has robbed me”—they who do not entertain such thoughts, in such men enmity comes to an end. For enmity never comes to an end through enmity here below; it comes to an end by non-enmity; this has been the rule from all eternity.’

The last of these verses is connected with

a narrative, which is to be found in one of the canonical books, and is worthy of the consideration of him who desires to know whether and how far the Christian thought, that 'there is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear,' recurs in the ground of the Buddhist moral intelligence.

On one occasion when a dispute arises in the band of his disciples, Buddha narrates to the discontented the history of King Long-grief, whom his powerful neighbour Brahmadatta had driven from his kingdom and deprived of all his possessions. Disguised as a mendicant monk the vanquished king fled with his wife from his home and sought safety in concealment at Benares, the capital of his enemy. There the queen bore him a son, whom he named Long-life: who became a clever boy, proficient in all arts. One day Long-grief was recognised by one of his quondam courtiers and his place of concealment betrayed to the king, Brahmadatta: thereupon the king ordered him and his wife to be led bound through all the streets of the town, and then hewn into four pieces outside

the town. But Long-life saw how his father and mother were being led in chains through the town. And he went up to his father, who said to him: 'My son Long-life, look not too far and not too near. For enmity comes not to an end by enmity, my son Long-life; by non-enmity, my son Long-life, enmity comes to an end.'

Thereupon king Long-grief and his wife were put to death. But Long-life made the guards who were placed over the corpses drunk, and when they had fallen asleep, he burnt both the dead and walked with folded hands three times round the funeral pile. Then he went into the forest and wept and wailed to his heart's content, then washed away his tears, went into the town, and took service in the king's elephant-stalls. By his beautiful singing he won the favour of Brahma-datta, who made him his trusted friend. One day he accompanied the king out hunting. They two were alone: Long-life had so managed that the retinue took another road. The king became tired, laid his head in Long-life's lap, and soon fell asleep. Thereupon thought

the youth Long-life: 'this King Brahmadata of Benares has done us much evil. He has taken away our army and baggage, and land, and treasure, and stores, and has killed my father and mother. Now is the time come for me to satisfy my enmity.' And he drew his sword from the scabbard. But just then this thought occurred to the youth Long-life: 'My father has said to me, when he was being led away to execution: "My son Long-life, look not too far and not too near. For enmity comes not to an end by enmity, my son Long-life; by non-enmity, my son Long-life, enmity comes to an end." It would not be right for me to transgress my father's words.' So he put his sword back in the scabbard again. The desire for revenge comes over him three times: three times the recollection of his father's last words overcomes his hatred. Then the king starts up from sleep: an evil dream has awakened him; he has dreamed about Long-life, that he is taking his life with the sword. 'Then the youth Long-life seized with his left hand the head of King Brahmadata of Benares, and with his right he drew

his sword, and he said to Brahmadata, the king of Benares: "I am the boy Long-life, O king, the son of King Long-grief, of Kosala. Thou hast done us much evil; thou hast taken away our army and baggage, and land, and treasure, and stores, and hast killed my father and mother. Now is the time come for me to satisfy my enmity." Then the King Brahmadata of Benares, fell at the feet of the youth Long-life, and said to the youth Long-life: "Grant me my life, my son Long-life: grant me my life, my son Long-life!" "How can I grant thee thy life, O king? It is thou, O king, who must grant me life." "Then grant thou me life, my son Long-life, and I will also grant thee life." Then the King Brahmadata of Benares and the boy Long-life granted each other life, gave each other their hands, and swore to do each other no harm. And King Brahmadata of Benares said to the youth Long-life: "My son Long-life, what thy father said to thee before his death, 'Look not too far and not too near. For enmity comes not to an end by enmity: by non-enmity enmity comes to an end'—

what did thy father mean by that?" "What my father, O king, said to me before his death: 'Look not too far,' signifies: 'Let not enmity long continue'; that was what my father meant when he said before his death: 'Look not too far.' And what my father, O king, said to me before his death: 'Not too near,' signifies: 'Fall not out too readily with thy friends'; that was what my father meant when he said to me before his death: 'Not too near.' And what my father, O king, said to me before his death: 'For enmity comes not to an end by enmity; by non-enmity enmity comes to an end,' signifies this: Thou, O king, hast killed my father and my mother. Were I now, O king, to seek to take thy life, then those who are attached to thee, O king, would take my life, and those who are attached to me, would take their lives; thus our enmity would not come to an end by enmity. But now, O king, thou hast granted me life and I, O king, have granted thee life: thus by non-enmity has our enmity come to an end. This is what my father meant when he said to me before his death:

‘For enmity comes not to an end by enmity; by non-enmity enmity comes to an end.’” Then King Brahmadata of Benares reflected: “Wonderful! Astonishing! What a clever youth is this Long-life, that he can expound in such detail the meaning of what his father has so briefly said.” And he gave him all that had belonged to his father, army and baggage, and land, and treasure, and store, and gave him his daughter to wife.’

While Buddhism enjoins the forgiveness of the wrongs which others have done us, we ought not to overlook the thought which incidentally peeps out from this moral, that in the dealings of the world forgiveness and reconciliation are a more profitable policy than revenge. The proposition that enmity comes not to an end by enmity is verified in a very substantial way in the case of the clever lad Long-life: instead of losing his life, he obtains a kingdom and a king’s daughter to wife.

The lesson of forgiveness and love of enemies finds a deeper and more beautiful expression in the pathetic narrative of prince

Kunâla, the son of the great Buddhist king Asoka (circ. 250 B.C.). Kunâla—this name was given to him on account of his wonderfully beautiful eyes, which are as beautiful as the eyes of the bird Kunâla—lives far from the bustle of the court, devoted to meditation on impermanence. One of the queens is burning with love for the beautiful youth, but her solicitation and the menaces of disdained beauty are alike in vain. Thirsting for revenge, she contrives to have him sent to a distant province, and then issues an order to that quarter, sealed with the slyly stolen ivory seal of the king, for the prince's eyes to be torn out. When the order arrives, no one can be prevailed upon to lay hands on the noble eyes of the prince. The prince himself offers rewards to anyone who should be prepared to execute the king's order. At last a man appears, repulsive to look on, who undertakes the performance. When, amid the cries of the weeping multitude, the first eye is torn out, Kunâla takes it in his hand and says: 'Why seest thou no longer those forms on which thou wast just now looking, thou coarse

ball of flesh? How they deceive themselves, how blamable are those fools, who cling to thee and say: "This is I." And when his second eye is torn out, he says: 'The eye of flesh, which is hard to get, has been torn from me, but I have won the perfect faultless eye of wisdom. The king has forsaken me, but I am the son of the highly exalted king of truth: whose child I am called.' He is informed that it is the queen, by whom the command concerning him was issued. Then he says: 'Long may she enjoy happiness, life, and power who has brought me so great welfare.' And he goes forth a beggar with his wife; and when he comes to his father's city, he sings to the lute before the palace. The king hears Kunâla's voice; he has him called into him, but when he sees the blind man before him, he cannot recognise his son. At last the truth comes to light. The king in the excess of grief and rage is about to torture and kill the guilty queen. But Kunâla says: 'It would not become thee to kill her. Do as honour demands and do not kill a woman. There is no higher reward than that

for benevolence : patience, sire, has been commanded by the Perfect One.' And he falls at the king's feet, saying: 'O king, I feel no pain, and, notwithstanding the inhumanity which has been practised on me, I do not feel the fire of anger. My heart has none but a kindly feeling for my mother, who has given the order to have my eyes torn out. As sure as these words are true, may my eyes again become as they were'—and his eyes shone in their old splendour as before.

Buddhist poetry has nowhere glorified in more beautiful fashion, forgiveness, and the love of enemies than in the narrative of Kunâla. But even here we feel that cool air which floats round all pictures of Buddhist morality. The wise man stands upon a height to which no act of man can approach. He resents no wrong which sinful passion may work him, but he even feels no pain under this wrong. The body, over which his enemies have power, is not himself. Ungrieved by the actions of other men, he permits his benevolence to flow over all, over the evil as well as the good. 'Those who cause me pain

and those who cause me joy, to all I am alike ; affection and hatred I know not. In joy and sorrow I remain unmoved, in honour and in dishonour ; throughout I am alike. That is the perfection of my equanimity.'

The Buddhists had a peculiar 'penchant' for systematic and methodical devotion at fixed times to certain modes and meditations, for which they previously put themselves with due precision in appropriate postures. So we have rules which are highly characteristic of this almost extravagant quaint peculiarity of Buddhist praxis, regarding the art and method by which a man is to foster within himself the disposition of kindly benevolence to all beings in the universe, following the course of the four-quarters of the heavens. Buddha says : 'After reflection, when I have returned from the begging excursion, I go into the forest. There I heap together the blades of grass or the leaves which are there to be found, and I sit down on them, with crossed legs, upright body, surrounding my countenance with vigilant thought, as with an aureola. Thus I remain, while I cause the power of benevo-

lence, which fills my mind, to extend over one quarter of the world ; in the same way over the second, the third, the fourth, above, below, across ; on all sides, in all directions over the whole of the entire universe I send forth the power of benevolence, which fills my spirit, the wide, great, immeasurable, feeling, which knows naught of hate, which doeth no evil.'

Whoever bears benevolence within him, possesses therein as it were a magical power ; men and beasts, when he lets fall on them a ray of this power, are thereby wondrously subdued and attracted. Devadatta, the Judas Iscariot among Buddha's disciples, lets loose on Buddha a wild elephant in a narrow street. 'But the Exalted One exercised on the elephant Nâlâgiri the power of his benevolence. Then the elephant Nâlâgiri, struck by the Exalted One with the power of his benevolence, lowered his trunk, went up to where the Exalted One was, and stopped before him.' On another occasion Ânanda entreats the Exalted One to be pleased to convert to the faith Roja, one of the stranger noblemen of the house of the Mallas, inimical

to the doctrine of Buddha. 'It is not difficult, O Ânanda, for the Perfect One to cause the Malla, Roja, to be won to this faith and this order.' Thereupon the Exalted One extended to Roja, the Malla, the power of his benevolence, rose from his seat and went into the house. And Roja, the Malla, struck by the Exalted One through the power of his benevolence, went, like a cow that seeks her young calf, from one house to another, from one cell to another, and asked the monks: 'Where, O venerable men, is he now dwelling, the Exalted One, the holy, supreme Buddha? I desire to see him, the Exalted One, the holy, supreme Buddha.'

Place may be given in this connection to one of those brief sketches, in which the fancy of the faithful loved to portray the conception of Buddha's previous existences. We possess a collection of such sketches and short stories, admitted into the sacred canon, which are arranged to illustrate the perfections or cardinal virtues of the later Buddha. The following brief passage is devoted to the virtue of benevolence:—

'I lived under the name of Sâma, in a forest on the mountain slope . . . , I drew to myself lions and tigers through the power of my benevolence. I lived in the forest surrounded by lions and tigers, by panthers, bears, and wild buffaloes, by gazelles and boars. No creature is in terror of me, and I have no fear of any being. The power of benevolence is my footing, therefore I dwell on the mountain slope.'

It appeared important to follow up the idea of benevolence, of forgiveness, of goodness even towards enemies, in the many various forms in which it meets us, now in the garment of sober reflections, again in the noble robe of pure and childlike poesy, and anon veiled in the surroundings of a quaint fantastic Methodism. It was not the emotion of a world-embracing love, but this peaceful feeling of friendly harmony, which gave its stamp to the common life of Buddha's disciples, and if the Buddhist faith permits even the animal world to participate in the blessing of this peace and this goodwill, this may serve to remind us of the charming tales

which Christian legend has woven round a form like that of the saint Franciscus, the friend of all animals, and of all inanimate nature.

Among the remaining emotional virtues, which are wont to be named in conjunction with those of uprightness and benevolence, the virtue of beneficence occupied the most prominent place in the didactic poetry of the Buddhists. It is significant how completely, in the conception of this poetry, the picture of the highest ideal beneficence melts away into that of renunciation, of self-sacrificing endurance. Whoever sets perfection before him as his goal, must be prepared to unconditionally surrender everything, even what is dearest to him. The limits, which our conception would set to the inherent propriety of the gift, are not here applicable; without any regard to what is the measure of the real benefit thereby extended to the recipient of the gift, the legends set before us as a duty, the most unbounded generosity, pushed even to the extreme of self-destruction. Though penances, as they were then practised among

the ascetics of India, were discarded by Buddha as 'vexatious, unworthy, unprofitable,' yet motives of the most closely kindred character maintained their place in Buddhist moral poetry: if Brahmanical poems tell of marvellous self-mortifications, by which the sages of the past obtained a power portentous to the gods themselves, it is not far to go from them to the Buddhist narratives of those displays of unlimited generosity, crowned with immeasurable heavenly reward, in which the proper element of beneficence vanishes into nothing behind that of ascetic self-sacrifice.

Thus, for instance, in the narrative of Prince Vessantara—i.e. the later Buddha in the last but one of his earthly existences. The king's son was unjustly driven from the kingdom by the people by a mistake. He gave his last treasures, even the waggon on which he rode, and the horses to beggars, and he went on with wife and children through the burning heat on foot. 'When the children saw trees bearing fruit in the forest, they wept, longing for the fruit. When they saw the weeping children, the lofty, mighty trees

bowed down of themselves and came down to the children.' At last they came to the Vanka mountain; there they lived as hermits in a leaf-hut. 'I and the princess Maddî, and the two children, Jâli and Kanhâjinâ, dwelt in the hermitage, each dissipating the sorrow of the others. I remained in the hermitage to guard the children; Maddî gathered wild fruits and brought them to us there for food. When I was there dwelling in the forest, there came a beggar, who asked me for my children, the two, Jâli and Kanhâjinâ. When I saw the beggar who had come, I smiled, and I took my two children and gave them to the Brahman. When I made over my children to Jûjaka the Brahman, the earth quaked, the forest-crowned Meru shook. And again it came to pass, that the god Sakka came down from heaven in the form of a Brahman; he asked me for Maddî, the princess, the virtuous and true. Then I took Maddî by the hand, filled her hands with water, and I gave Maddî to him with cheerful heart. When I gave him Maddî, the gods in heaven were glad, and again the earth quaked, and

the forest-crowned Meru shook. Jâli and Kanhâjinâ, my daughters, and Maddî, the princess, the true wife, I gave away, and I counted it not loss so that I might win the Buddhahood.'

Another of these narratives of Buddha's past existence is the following 'Story of the wise hare.'

'And again in another life I was a hare, that lived in a mountain forest: I ate grass and vegetables, leaves and fruits, and did no being any harm. An ape, a jackal, a young otter, and I, we dwelt together and we were seen together early and late. But I instructed them in duties and taught them what is good and what evil: abstain from evil, incline to good. On holy days when I saw the moon full, I said to them: "to-day is the holy day; have alms in readiness that ye may dispense them to the worthy. Give alms according to merit and spend the holy day in fasting." Then said they: "So be it," and according to their power and ability they got their offerings ready and looked for one who might be worthy to

receive them. But I sat down and sought in my mind for a gift, which I was to offer: "If I find a worthy object, what is my gift to be? I have not sesame, nor beans, nor rice, nor butter. I live on grass only; one cannot offer grass. If a worthy person comes to me and asks me to give him food, then I shall give him myself; he shall not go hence empty-handed." Thereupon Sakka, the king of gods, discerned my thoughts, and came in the form of a Brahman to my cover to put me to the test and see what I would give him. When I saw him, I spake to him joyfully these words: "'Tis well that thou comest to me to seek food. A noble gift, such as hath not erst been given, shall I give thee this day. Thou observest the duties of uprightness; it is not thy character to inflict pain on any creature. But go gather wood and kindle a fire; I will roast myself; roasted thou mayest consume me." He said: "So be it," and he gladly gathered wood and stacked it in a great heap. He put living coals in the middle, and a fire was soon kindled; then he shook off the dust, which covered his powerful limbs, and sat

down before the fire. When the great heap of wood began to send up flame and smoke, I leaped into the air and plunged into the midst of the burning fire. As fresh-water quenches the torment of heat for him who dives into it, as it gives vitality and comfort, so the flaming fire into which I leaped, like fresh-water, quelled all my torment. Cuticle and skin, flesh and sinews, bones, heart and ligaments, my whole body with all its members, I have given to the Brahman.'

Buddha's last existence, the days of attained sanctity, of itinerancy and teaching, are not adorned in the narratives of the order with any such marvels of self-sacrifice. Good works are for him to do, who is pressing on to perfection. The Perfect One himself 'hath overcome both shackles, good and evil.'

MORAL SELF-CULTURE

THE most important part of moral action does not lie according to Buddhist notions in duties which are owing externally, from man to man, or more correctly speaking, from each being to the being nearest him, but in the

scope of his own inner life, in the exercise of incessant self-discipline : 'Step by step, piece by piece, moment by moment, must he who is wise, cleanse his ego from all impurity, as the goldsmith refines silver.'

The ego, whose reality remained to metaphysics an unsolved enigma, here becomes for ethical speculation a determinate power, before which everything external to it vanishes into the background as something foreign. To find the ego is acknowledged to be the worthiest object of all search, to make a friend of the ego the truest and highest friendship. 'By thine ego spur on thine ego ; by thine ego explore thine ego ; so shalt thou, O monk, well guarding thine ego and vigilant, live in happiness. For the protection of the ego is the ego ; the refuge of the ego is the ego ; therefore keep thine ego in subjection, as a horse-breaker a noble steed.' 'First of all let a man establish his own ego in the good ; then only can he instruct others ; thus shall the wise remain free from misery.'

We have already touched those three leading notions, constituting in a certain

manner a succession of steps, into which Buddhist ethic has divided the different ranges of moral action : uprightness, self-concentration, and wisdom. To the duties of internal watchfulness, self-education, and self-purification, on the part of the ego, the scholastic system allots a middle place, between the first and second of these ranges. External rectitude is the foundation, from which alone proceeding can those internal and deeper tasks of morality be performed, and these tasks again occupy a preparatory position as regards the last finishing forces of spiritual effort, self-concentration and wisdom. The standard expressions, by which the language of the schools describes the class of moral duties in question and inserts them in the described manner in that threefold class, are the headings : government of the senses, vigilance and attention, to which is further added the idea of contentment, absence of the feeling of want. We must keep the eye and all other senses in subjection, so that they may not, by dwelling on external objects, find pleasure in them and convey to the ego impressions which

endanger its peace and purity. We are to direct all our movements with vigilant consciousness; whether we walk or stand, whether we sit or lie down, whether we talk or be silent, we are to think of what we are doing, and take care that it be done becomingly. We should need nothing, but what we carry on our persons, like the bird in the air which has no treasure, and carries nothing with it but its wings, which bear it whithersoever it wishes.

In contact with people of worldly occupation the most scrupulous caution must be observed. 'As one, who has no shoes, walks over thorny ground, watchfully picking his steps, so let the wise man walk in the village.' 'As the bee damages not the colour or perfume of the flower, but sucks its juice and flies on, so let the wise man walk in the village.' When a man has completed his begging excursion through the village, he is to examine himself, whether he has remained free from all internal dangers. Buddha says to Sâriputta: 'A monk, Sâriputta, must thus reflect: "On my way to the village, when I was going to collect alms, and in the places where I

solicited alms, and on my way back from the village, have I in the forms which the eye perceives, experienced pleasure, or desire, or hatred, or distraction, or anger in my mind ?” If the monk, Sâriputta, on thus examining himself, discovers : “ On my way to the village, etc., I have in the forms which the eye perceives, experienced pleasure, etc.,” then must this monk, O Sâriputta, endeavour to become free from these evil treacherous emotions. But if the monk, Sâriputta, who submits himself to this test, finds : “ I have not experienced pleasure, etc.,” then should this monk, O Sâriputta, be glad and rejoice : Happy the man who has long accustomed his mind to good !’ ‘ As a woman or a man,’ it is said in another Sutta, ‘ who is young and takes a delight in being clean, looks at his face in a bright, clear mirror, or in a clear stream of water, and, if he discovers therein any smudge or spot, takes pain to remove this smudge or spot, but if he sees therein no smudge or spot, is glad : “ That’s good ! I am clean ! ” so also the monk, who sees that he is not yet free from all those evil treacherous emotions, must en-

deavour to become free from all those evil treacherous emotions. But if he sees that he is free from all those evil treacherous emotions, this monk is to be glad and rejoice: Happy the man, who has long accustomed his mind to that which is good !'

Incessantly and ever in new forms, we find the admonition repeated, not to take the show of moral action for the reality, not to remain clinging to the external, when salvation can come alone from within. It is all very well to guard the eye and ear from evil, but mere not-seeing and not-hearing avail nothing ; else were the blind and deaf the most perfect. The purpose, with which we speak and act, is decisive of the value of word and action ; the word alone is worthless, where acts are wanting : 'Our whole existence depends on our thought ; thought is its noblest factor ; in thought its state consists. He who speaks or acts with impure thoughts, him sorrow follows, as the wheel follows the foot of the draught animal. Our whole existence depends on our thought ; thought is its noblest factor ; in thought its state consists. He who

speaks or acts with pure thoughts, him joy follows, like the shadow which never forsakes him.' 'He who speaks many wise words, but does not act up to them, the fool is like a herd who counts the cows of others; he has no share in the nobility of the monks. He who speaks only a few wise words, but walks in the law of truth, who gets rid of love and hate, and of infatuation, who has knowledge and whose mind has found deliverance, who hankers after nothing in heaven or on earth, he has part in the nobility of the monks.'

MÂRA, THE EVIL ONE

THE toil, by which the spirit seeks purity, rest, and deliverance, pictures itself to the religious consciousness of Buddhism as a struggle against a hostile power. This power of the evil, of the sorrow, which opposes a resistance to man's escape from its shackles—whence comes it? Buddhist thought holds aloof from this problem. If the question of the 'origin of sorrow' be asked, this question merely directs itself to ascertaining how sorrow originates in us, by what sluice the

world-deluging stream of sorrow-fraught impermanence finds its way into our existence. But if one were to seek to know whence it comes that there is sorrow at all, Buddhism would add this to the too inquisitive questions on which the Exalted One has revealed nothing, because they are not profitable to happiness. To be curious about the origin of evil and of sorrow would amount to nothing less than prying into the origin of the universe, for the innermost essence of the world according to Buddhism consists in this, that it is subject to evil, that it is a state of continual sorrow.

It is not, therefore, as the one by whom evil has come into the world, but rather as the supreme lord of all evil, as the chief seducer to evil thought, word and deed, that the creed of the Buddhas looks upon Mâra, the Evil One, the Prince of Death, for Mâra means death. The kingdom of this world with its pleasures is the kingdom of death. In the highest of the spheres of the universe, which are given over to the dominion of pleasure, he rules with his hosts as a power-

ful god ; thence he comes down to earth, when it is his object to attack the kingdom of Buddha and his saints.

To simple faith Mâra is a personal existence, a personality, limited by the confines of time and space, every whit as real as Buddha, as all men and all gods. But philosophic thought, which sees the enemy of peace and happiness in the impersonal power of a universal law swaying the external world, regulating origination and decease, has naturally a tendency either to push this conception of Mâra into the background or to amplify his personal existence into a universal. Without Mâra's actually ceasing to be looked upon as a person, the limits of his being become so wide as to have room to embrace the contents of the whole universe subjected to sorrow. Wherever there is an eye and form, wherever there is an ear and sound, wherever there is thinking and thought, there is Mâra, there is sorrow, there is world. Râdha says to Buddha: 'Mâra, Mâra, thus people say, O sire. Wherein, O sire, consists the being of Mâra?' 'Where there is cor-

poreal form, O Râdha, there is Mâra, or he who kills, or he who is dying. Therefore, O Râdha, look upon corporeal form as being Mâra, or that it is he who kills, or he who is dying, or sickness, or an abscess, or a wounding dart, or impurity, or impure existence. Whoever regards it thus, understands it correctly.'

Mâra is not everlasting, as there is nowhere in the domain of origination and decease an everlasting permanent. But as long as worlds revolve in their orbits and beings die and are born again, new Mâras are evermore appearing with ever new hosts of gods, who are subject to them; and thus we may say that the existence of Mâra is actually eternal in that sense in which alone eternal existence can be conceived by Buddhist speculation.

In those discourses and legends which speak of Mâra, the tempter, we meet with none of that gloomy tragedy with which we are accustomed to fancy the diabolical deadly foe of good surrounded. The colours and grand outlines for the dark form of a Lucifer were not at the command of the Buddhist

monk-poets. They narrate petty, often poorly enough conceived, legends of the attacks of Mâra on Buddha and his pious followers, how he appears at one time as a Brahman, and at another as a husbandman, at another as an elephant-king, and in many other different forms comes to shake their sanctity by temptations, their faith and their knowledge by lies.

If a holy man makes his excursion for alms in vain and nowhere obtains a gift, it is Mâra's work ; if the people in a village ridicule pious monks with derisive gestures, Mâra has entered into them ; when Ânanda in the critical moment before Buddha's death neglected to ask the Master to prolong his earthly existence to the end of this mundane period, it so happened because Mâra had bewildered his mind. 'At one time,' as we read, 'the Exalted One was living in the land of Kosala, in the Himalaya, in a log-hut. When the Exalted One was thus living retired in hermitage, this thought entered his mind : "It is possible really to rule as a king in righteousness, without killing or causing to

be killed, without practising oppression or permitting oppression to be practised, without suffering pain or inflicting pain on another." Then Mâra, the Evil One, perceived in his mind the thought which had arisen in the mind of the Exalted One, and he approached the Exalted One and spake thus: "May the Exalted One, O sire, be pleased to rule as a king, may the Perfect One be pleased to rule as a king in righteousness, without killing or causing to be killed, without practising oppression or permitting oppression to be practised, without suffering pain or inflicting pain on another." Buddha challenges him: "What dost thou see in me, thou Evil One, that thou speakest thus to me?" Mâra says: "The Exalted One, O sire, has made the four-fold miraculous power his own:—if the Exalted One, O sire, desired, he could ordain that the Himalaya, the king of mountains, should become gold, and it would turn to gold." Buddha motions him away: what would it profit the wise man, if he possessed even a mountain of silver or of gold? "He who has comprehended sorrow, whence it

springs, how can he bend himself to desire ? He who knows that earthly existence is a fetter in this world, let him practise that which sets him free therefrom." Then Mâra, the Evil One, said, "The Exalted One knows me, the Perfect One knows me," and disconcerted and disheartened he rose and went away'—the invariable obvious conclusion of these narratives: Buddha looks through the Evil One and turns his temptations to naught.

Of the precautions which the religious should adopt with constant vigilance against the machinations of Mâra, Buddha speaks in the fable of the tortoise and the jackal. There was once a tortoise, that went in the evening to the bank of a river to seek her food. And there went also a jackal to the river to seek for prey. When the tortoise saw the jackal, she hid all her limbs in her shell and dived quietly and fearlessly into the water. The jackal ran and waited until she should put forth one of her limbs from her shell. But the tortoise did not move; so the jackal was obliged to give up his prey and go away. 'Thus, O disciples, Mâra also is

constantly and evermore lurking for you and cogitating: "I shall gain access to them by the door of their eye—or, by the door of their ear, or of their nose, or of their tongue, or of their body, or of their thought, I shall gain access to them." Therefore, O disciples, guard the doors of your senses . . . then will Mâra, the Evil One, give it up and forsake you, when he finds he cannot find any access to you, as the jackal was obliged to depart from the tortoise.'

THE LAST STAGES OF THE PATH OF SALVATION
—ABSTRACTIONS—SAINTS AND BUDDHAS

THUS is the inimical purpose of Mâra in league with the inimical natural law of the sorrow-causing chain of causes and effects. In the wilderness of the 'sankhâras,' of restless, substanceless procession, in ever surging and undulating darkness, the solitary combatants stand, who struggle to find the exit from this labyrinth of sorrow. The struggle is neither slight nor brief. From that moment forward, when first the conviction dawns upon a soul that this battle must be fought, that there

is a deliverance which can be gained—from that first beginning of the struggle up to the final victory, countless ages of the world pass away. Earth worlds and heavenly worlds, and worlds of hells also, states of torment, arise and pass away, as they have arisen and passed away from all eternity. Gods and men, all animated beings, come and go, die and are born again, and amid this endless tide of all things, the beings who are seeking deliverance, now advancing and victorious, and anon driven back, press on to their goal. The path reaches beyond the range of the eye, but it has an end. After countless wanderings through worlds and ages the goal at last appears before the wanderer's gaze. And in his sense of victory there is mingled a feeling of pride for the victory won by his own power. The Buddhist has no god to thank, as he had previously no god to invoke during his struggle. The gods bow before him, not he before the gods. The only help, which can be imparted to the struggle, comes from those like himself, from those who have gone before, the Buddhas and their enlightened disciples,

who have wrestled as he now wrestles, and who cannot, it is true, grant him the victory, but can show him the path to victory.

Buddhism, closely following a common feature of all Indian religious life which preceded it, regards as stages preparatory to the victory which is won, certain exercises of spiritual abstraction, in which the 'religieux' withdraws his thoughts from the external world with its motley crowd of changing forms, to anticipate in the stillness of his own ego, afar from pain and pleasure, the cessation of the impermanent. The devotion of abstraction is to Buddhism what prayer is to other religions.

It cannot be doubted that protracted and methodically pursued efforts to superinduce states of abstraction have actually formed a very prominent element in the spiritual life of the monks. The prose as well as the poetry of the sacred texts bears ample testimony to this. Monks who by a noisy manner disturb their brothers at moments of abstraction are reprimanded; a careful housekeeper, when he assigns the brothers their resting places,

does not omit to arrange for those of them who are endowed with the gift of abstraction, a separate lodging, so that they may not be disturbed by others. And also through the poems of the monk-poets there runs a vein of delight in the solitude of the forest cheered by the blessing of holy abstraction. 'If before me, if behind me, my eye sees no other, it is truly pleasant to dwell alone in the forest. Come, then! Into solitude will I go, into the forest, which Buddha praises: therein it is good for the solitary monk to dwell, who seeks perfection. In the "sita" forest rich in blossoms, in the cool mountain cave, will I wash my body and walk alone. Alone without comrades in the lovely forest—when shall I have gained the goal? when shall I be free from sins?' 'When the thunderclouds in heaven beat the drum, when the floods of water choke the paths of the air, and the monk in a mountain cave surrenders himself to abstraction, he can have no greater joy. On banks of flower-bestrewn streams, which are garlanded with motley forest-crowns, he sits joyfully wrapt

in abstraction: he can have no higher joy.'

The descriptions in the prose Sûtras which deal with these conditions of the mind, although the scholastic accessories of doubtful or imaginary psychological categories materially impair the objectivity of the picture, leave no room to doubt that here circumstances of a pathological kind also, as well as qualities which a sound mind is in a position to induce, must have played a part. The predispositions to these were superabundantly at hand. In men who were by the power of a religious idea torn from existence in the regular relations of home-life, the physical consequences of a wandering mendicant life, combined with spiritual over-excitement, exhaustion of the nervous system, might easily produce a tendency to morbid phases of this kind. We hear of hallucinations of the sight as well as of the hearing, of 'heavenly visions' and 'heavenly sounds.' From the days when Buddha aspired to enlightenment, it is related how he sees 'a ray of light and the vision of forms,' or even

a ray of light alone and again forms only. The appearances of deities also, or of the tempter of whom the legends have so much to relate, betray the existence of hallucinations. Still, visions of this kind are, comparatively speaking, isolated occurrences. The normal type of 'self-concentration' was that which appears in the 'four stages of abstraction,' mentioned and described times without number. In a quiet chamber, but oftener in the forest, a man sat down, 'with crossed legs, body erect, surrounding his countenance with vigilant thought.' Thus he persevered in long-continued motionlessness of body, and freed himself successively from the disturbing elements of 'desire and evil emotions,' of 'deliberation and reflection,' of joy and sorrow; at last even breathing stopped. Thus the spirit became 'collected, purified, refined, free from impurity, free from sin, pliant, ready to be wrought, firm and unflinching.' This was the condition in which the sense of clairvoyant knowledge of the rationale of the universe became active. As the secret of creation revealed itself to Christian enthusiasts in



moments of ecstasy, so in this case men imagined they looked back over the past of their own ego through countless periods of transmigration, imagined they saw throughout the universe wandering beings, how they are dying and being born again, imagined they could penetrate the thoughts of others. Even the possession of miraculous powers, of the capability of vanishing and reappearing, of the capability of multiplying the individual ego, is alleged in connection with this state of abstraction. In addition to this there is talk of an otherwise acquired concentration of the mind, which, without pathological ingredients, rests solely on a progressive and methodical abstraction from the plurality of the phenomenal world. 'As this house of Migâramâtâ is empty of elephants and cattle, of stallions and mares, empty of silver and gold, empty of the crowds of men and women, and it is not empty only in one respect—viz. not empty of monks, so also Ânanda the monk gets rid of the notion "man," and thinks only on the notion "forest," . . . then he perceives that emptiness has entered his notions in re-

spect of the notion "village," and emptiness has entered in respect of the notion "man"; non-emptiness is alone present in respect to the notion "forest." And next the notion 'forest' also is got rid of, so that the notion 'earth' is attained with the omission of all the multitudinous variety of the earth's surface; thence the mind mounts in a similar way to the notion of 'endlessness of space,' of 'endlessness of reason,' of 'nothing-whatever-ness,' step by step approaching deliverance.'

As that which accomplishes deliverance is wisdom—i.e. the knowledge of the Doctrine, the knowledge principally of the four sacred truths—wisdom and abstraction lend each other mutual support and aid: 'There is no abstraction where there is not wisdom, no wisdom where there is not abstraction. Truly he is near the Nirvâna, in whom abstraction dwells and wisdom.'

Side by side with the doctrine of abstractions there was another doctrine matured, which, like it, had as its scope the last stages of the path of deliverance: the theory of the four graded classes in which believers who are

approaching the goal are arranged, according to the greater or lesser perfection of their saintliness. In the older text this doctrine moved, comparatively speaking, in the background. Men were then content with defining only a double event in the souls of those who hear and accept Buddha's teaching. At first the knowledge of the impermanence of all being dawns upon them, 'then bursts upon them,' as the standard expression of the texts runs, 'the clear and spotless vision of the truth: everything whatever that is liable to origination, is also liable to decease.' They discern painful impermanence necessarily inherent in the existence of all being. He who has attained this knowledge and perseveres as a monk in earnest endeavour, may hope to take even the last step and reach the stage where, 'by the cessation of the hankering after the earthly, his soul becomes free from sins': the ultimate aim of spiritual aspiration, deliverance, and sanctity.'

We refrain from unfolding in this place the system of the four graded classes of believers, of later date, as it appears to be, and over

weighted, as it is, with ever more increasingly cumbrous scholastic accessories. To the belonging to one or other of these grades there were, moreover, attached no claims to a more or less prominent position in the Order; how far each individual had advanced in his approach to the goal of sanctity, was an affair which wholly concerned his own heart only and of which the Order as such took no notice. The highest of these stages, that of complete deliverance, was regarded as attainable by monks alone. How could those who had renounced everything earthly for the sake of their salvation, concede that eternal freedom from the world and sorrows of the world is compatible with the continuance of the outer man in worldly life? Yet an exception was made in favour of pious lay disciples, if not in the matter of their life, at least in their death: a believing, wise layman, who directs his last thoughts, his last longings, to the cessation of earthly being, becomes participator in this prize. 'I tell thee, O Mahânâma, that between a lay disciple, whose soul has reached this stage of deliverance, and a monk, whose

soul is freed from all impurity, there exists no difference, as far as concerns the state of their deliverance.'

High above these four stages stand those perfect ones, 'who have of themselves alone become partakers of the Buddhahood': they have won the knowledge that brings deliverance, not as disciples of one of the holy universal Buddhas, but of their own power, yet their perfection does not extend so far that they could preach it to the world. The sacred texts seldom touch this notion of the Paccekabuddhas: it can only have played an entirely secondary part in the ancient Order's circle of conceptions. It appears that the Paccekabuddhas were thought to have lived chiefly in the earlier ages, when there were no universal Buddhas and no Orders founded by them; the notion of a Paccekabuddha seems to have been principally intended to imply that even in such periods the door of deliverance is not shut against earnest and powerful effort. But the doctrine later advanced, that the appearance of Paccekabuddhas is confined exclusively to those ages,

is not, as far as it appears, in accordance with the dogmatic of the sacred Pâli texts. 'In the whole universe,' says Buddha, 'there is, except me only, no one who is equal to the Paccekabuddhas'—the existence of saints of this grade is consequently, to all appearance, admitted even in Buddha's own time.

Above the four grades of believers and saints, there stand last of all, embodying in themselves the essence of every supreme perfection, the 'exalted, holy, universal Buddhas.'

It may cause surprise, that it is only in this place that our sketch mentions the dogma of the Buddhas, somewhat as an appendix to other more essential groups of thought. Is the doctrine of Buddha's personality a secondary matter, must it not be a fundamental part of the Buddhist faith, quite as much as in our regard the doctrine of the personality of Christ is a fundamental, nay, 'the' fundamental part of the Christian creed?

At hardly any other point does the general similarity of these two lines of evolution appear to diverge more determinately than at this point. It may sound paradoxical, but it is

undoubtedly correct to say, that the Buddhist doctrine might be in all essentials what it actually is, and yet admit of the idea of the Buddha being conceived apart from it. That the ineffaceable memory of Buddha's earthly life, that the belief in Buddha's word as the word of truth, subjection to Buddha's law as the law of holiness—that all these considerations were of the utmost importance in the formation of religious life and experience in the Order of Buddha's disciples, scarcely needs to be said. But as far as the dogmatic treatment of that one great problem is concerned, with which alone the whole of Buddhist dogmatic deals, the question of pain and deliverance, the dogma of Buddha stands in the background. In the creed-formula of the four sacred truths the word Buddha does not occur.

The key to the explanation of this remarkable attitude of the idea of Buddha towards the central ideas of the Buddhist circle of thought, is to be found, I believe, in pre-Buddhist history.

Where a doctrinal system, like the Christian, grows up on the basis of a strong faith in a

God, it is natural that in the consciousness of the community a reflection, ay, more than a reflection of the grandeur and fulness of the almighty and all-good God should fall on the person of him who, as master, teacher, example, is in every way of immeasurable significance to the life of his followers. The grace of God is said to bestow eternal life on man: the Master becomes the mediator by whom the grace of God extends to man. His nature is raised in supernatural dignity to unity with God's nature; his earthly doings and sufferings appear to be the world-delivering doings and sufferings of God.

The preconditions did not exist, under which an analogous evolution of notions regarding Buddha's person might have taken place. The faith in the ancient deities had been obliterated by the pantheism of the Âtman theory; and the Âtman, the eternal inactive universal One, was not a god, who could evince pity for man by a display of delivering activity. And even the belief in the Âtman itself had been effaced or lost, and as ruler over the world longing for deliverance

there remained no more a god, but only the natural law of the necessary concatenation of causes and effects. There stood man alone as the sole operative agent in the struggle against sorrow and death; his task was, by a skilful knowledge of the law of nature, to aim at gaining a position against it, in which he was beyond the reach of its sorrow-bringing operations.

The data, which must determine the dogmatic treatment of Buddha's person, were hereby given. He could not be a god-sent deliverer, for man looked not for deliverance from a god. Knowledge is to deliver; my knowledge is to deliver me: so he must be the great knower and bringer of knowledge for all the world. He must be a being, who has no inherent supernatural nobility beyond other beings, but by higher, more powerful effort first discovers that path, in which others after him, following his footsteps, walk. In a certain sense we may say, that every disciple, who is pressing on to holiness, is also a Buddha, as well as his Master. This idea of essential resemblance between Buddha and all de-

livered men is very significantly set forth in the following words:—‘As when, O Brahman, a hen has laid eggs, eight or ten or twelve, and the hen has sat on them long enough, and kept them warm and hatched them: when then one of the chickens first breaks the egg-shell with the tip of its claw or with its beak, and creeps successfully out of the egg, how will men describe this chicken, as the oldest or the youngest?’ ‘It will be called the oldest, venerable Gotama, for it is the oldest of them.’ ‘So also, O Brahman, of those beings, who live in ignorance and are shut up and confined as it were in an egg, I have first broken the egg-shell of ignorance and alone in the universe obtained the most exalted, universal Buddhahood. Thus am I, O Brahman, the eldest, the noblest, of beings.’ Buddha does not deliver beings, but he teaches them to deliver themselves, as he has delivered himself. They accept his declaration of the truth, not because it comes from him, but because, verified by his words, personal knowledge of that whereof he speaks, dawns on their minds.

This is not, however, to be understood, as if Buddha's form had not in the belief of the Order exceeded the limits of earthly-human reality, as if dogmatic had disdained to cast round Buddha's head the halo of a glory that illuminates the universe. The land of India was not like the Athens of Thucydides and Aristophanes, in which care was taken that Sammāsambuddhas and god-men should not appear on earth. The eye of the Indian was accustomed at every step to regard the natural course of events within their earthly limits as interwoven in fanciful continuity with infinite distance. The longer thought occupied itself with any speculation, the oftener it recurred to it, the more the human, the earthly in it vanished behind the dreamy, the typical, the universal. The age in which the doctrines of the sorrow of everything earthly and of deliverance first engaged young thought, could look upon a Yâjñavalkya and a Çândilya as merely wise and pure men; viewed as the Buddhist viewed them, the floating outlines of such forms were bound to fix themselves after the type of the exalted, holy universal

Buddhas appearing at fixed times according to an eternal law of the universe.

It could scarcely be otherwise than that the historical form of the one actual Buddha multiplied itself under dogmatic treatment to a countless number of past and coming Buddhas. It might satisfy a faith, which measured the past of this world by thousands of years, its future by years, or perhaps by days, to see standing out above the span of time the form of one Saviour, to whom the past prophetically pointed, whose second coming puts an end to the brief future. For the Indian no horizon bounds the view of world-life; from immeasurable distance to immeasurable distance, through innumerable immense ages of the world, extends the gigantic course of origination, decease, and re-origination. How could he regard what appeared to stand in the centre of his own world, of his own time, as the universal middle point of all worlds, of all times?

As an effort to reach the light that gives deliverance extends throughout the whole coming and going of ages, throughout the

whole of being, enveloped in dark sorrow, so must at certain times certain beings obtain a glimpse of this light; they must become Buddhas and fulfil the career ordained from everlasting, of a Buddha. They are all born in the Eastern half of central Hindostan; they all come of Brahman or Kshatriya families; they all attain delivering knowledge, sitting at the foot of a tree. Their lives are of different duration according to the ages in which they appear, and the doctrine also which they teach, maintains its hold, sometimes for a longer, sometimes for a shorter period, but in each case for a definite length of time. 'Five hundred years, Ânanda, will the doctrine of the truth abide,' says Buddha to his beloved disciple. Then the faith vanishes from the earth, until a new Buddha appears, and again 'sets in motion the Wheel of the Law.'

It follows that as the line of Buddhas extends throughout the immeasurable extent of time, so also the not less immeasurable expanses of space have their Buddhas. The sacred texts appear to touch very slightly this idea of Buddha appearing in distant systems

of worlds, but the conception is quite in keeping with Indian fancy, that even in those worlds separated from us by infinities the same struggle of beings for deliverance repeats itself, which is going on on this earth. 'It cannot happen, O disciples,' says Buddha, 'it is impossible for two holy, universal Buddhas to appear in one world-system at one time, not one before or after the other'—in these words we may perhaps see a hint given, that in other systems, apart from what is occurring in our world, similar triumphs of light over darkness are won, to that which Buddha has secured under the tree at Uruvelâ.

We hope to be excused from expanding in detail the scholastic predicates, which dogmatic attributes to the exalted, holy, universal Buddhas, from speaking of the ten Buddha faculties, of the thirty-two external marks of a Buddha, and so on. Instead of this we shall try to exhibit the 'tout ensemble,' which the union of all these perfections produced in the imagination of the believer, the picture of supreme power, supreme knowledge, supreme peace, supreme compassion.

We shall speak in the words of the texts.

Buddha says: 'The all-subduing, the all-knowing, am I, in everything that I am, without a spot. I have given up everything; I am without desire, a delivered one. By my own power I possess knowledge; whom should I call my master? I have no teacher: no one is to be compared to me. In the world, including the heavens, there is no one like unto me. I am the Holy One in the world; I am the supreme Master. I alone am the perfect Buddha; the flames are extinct in me; I have attained the Nirvâna.' 'The Exalted One,' Kaccâna names him, 'the bringer of joy, the dispenser of joy, whose organs of life are placid, whose spirit is at rest, the supreme self-subduer and peace-possessor, the hero, who has conquered self and watches himself, who holds his desires in check.' 'He appears in the world for salvation to many people, for joy to many people, out of compassion for the world, for the blessing, the salvation, the joy of gods and men.' Thus have the Buddhas of bygone ages appeared, thus shall the Buddhas of coming ages appear.

Will their succession ever have an end? Will the victory become complete, so that all beings shall have crossed over to deliverance.

The faithful of ancient days directed their thoughts but seldom to this last question as to the future. But they did not wholly pass it over. In the narrative of Buddha's death we read the exclamation to which the god Brahma gave utterance when the Holy One entered into the Nirvâna:

'In the worlds beings all put off corporeity at some time,

Just as at this present time Buddha, the prince of victory, the supreme master of all worlds,

The mighty, Perfect One, hath entered into Nirvâna.'

Thus beings shall all reach the Nirvâna. Then, when animated, sorrow-susceptible beings have vanished from the domain of being, will the procession of the Sankhâras, the origination and decadence of worlds, continue in eternity? Or, after the extinction of all consciousness in which this procession was reflected, will the world of the Sankhâras

fall to pieces, sinking in its own ruins? Will the Nirvâna, in the depths of which the realms of the visible have disappeared, be the One and All?

We ask too much. 'The Exalted One has not revealed this. As it does not conduce to salvation, as it does not conduce to holy life, to separation from the earthly, to the extinction of desire, to cessation, to peace, to knowledge, to illumination, to Nirvâna, therefore has the Exalted One not revealed it.'

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